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EDGAR:

A NATIONAL TALE.

By MISS APPLETON,

AUTHOR OF PRIVATE EDUCATION, &c.

God and my Right.

Edward III. King of England.

.. .. .. Man he made, and for him built,
Magnificent, this world, and Earth his seat,
Him Lord pronounced;.. .. ..
Subjected to his service, angel-wings,
And flaming ministers, to watch and tend
Their earthly charge.

Milton. Paradise Lost, b. ix.

To you a Father should be as a God,
One that compos'd your beauties; yea, and one
To whom you are but as a form in wax
By him imprinted; and within his power
To leave the figure, or disfigure it.

Shakespeare. Mids. Night's Dream.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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EDGAR.

BOOK XI.

THE MORAL.

WHO is yonder smiling maid, robed in purity, that hovers round the favoured dwellings of mortals? I behold her delicate touch inspiring courage, animation, tenderness and joy. Every eye sparkles in her approach; even the sad heart leaps in the welcome sight. The infant spies, and stretching forth his little arms, half laughing, half complaining, spurns his cradle-bed with his tender foot, and heaves his straining body upwards. The blushing virgin feels the grasp of this angelic being, and sighing, courts the silent shades. At a distance she hears a step; with agitated bosom she turns her graceful head, and quickly perceives the youth to whom she

is dear; modesty teaches her to avert the gaze; and onward impulsive she hastens, hearing in vain the voice that implores her stay. But she flies in vain, for the step, strong and swift, overtakes her's. With soft reluctance and downcast look she yields the snowy hand; and as the village bells murmur on the ear, suffers words to mingle that calm her lovely agitation, and satisfy her spotless innocence. Who is the maid that can thus dispense sweet gifts, and unite by such golden links, man to man, father to child, youth to maid? Her name is Love. Unlike to that turbulent and audacious boy, who is the son of Passion, and the brother of Vice, she is the chaste daughter of Virtue and Social-tie; born to be the cementer of kindred souls, the guardian of helpless infancy, the prop of declining age, the smoother of affliction, the pledge of happiness,—to bless all the earth, and to reconcile his Redeemer with man.

As Prince Edgar finished the relation, the lady Berengaria sighed to find it ended; and having gracefully presented her thanks, retired

retired with her favourite and the attendants. " I see," said the Cypriot Prince, " that my sister greatly admires thy story; she is much affected; and I trust thou wilt relate, with thy ready invention, many such for her amusement. The Princess is tender and innocent. Dost thou find her engaging, my lord?"—" So engaging," replied Atheling, " that methinks I would I had such a sister."—" Thou hast not a wish that she were dearer, then, my lord? The hand of my little sister hath been already courted by powerful princes."—Edgar deeply blushed, and was for several moments silent. A few pangs for the past shot across his bosom—but he presently drew near to de Lusignan, and grasping his hand, solemnly said, " the moon rises in placid beauty—suffer me to lead thee to the royal gardens, and to speak to thee as my friend, my early friend, and to forget for an hour the dignity of thy station; suffer me to lose the sovereign, and to remember only the man."—" Oh! that it could ever be so," hastily answered de Lusignan, " come, let us go this moment—

the air is sweet and mild, yet will we be guarded by the mantle."

The Princes descended the marble steps, and trode the spacious walks. The heart of Atheling throbbed in agitation, as he drew forth events which he had striven to suppress; however, the mild breeze revived him; the sweet serenity of heavenly motions strengthened his drooping mind, and as he pressed the arm of his friend, he began:

"I owe it to myself, to my generous and royal host, the explanation I would present him. Listen, my friend: and pity the breast which has suffered the sting of reproach, from disregarding the cautions of virtue.

"After Poictier's battle, I remained two years imprisoned, and was only released under promise of not returning to my native country, or France, during three years. Imprudently I passed through Italy and the state of Venice, disguised; retaining too long, precautions once necessary.—Oh! had I not done so, I might then have embraced a beloved friend. Alas!

to

to do wrong asks but a moment—remorse and repentance demand whole years. By my own imprudence, I hurried away from Venice, and entered into the service of the Venetian army in Candia. Here the greatness of my general's virtue, and my own anxiety to retrieve my error, urged me to exertion, and encouraged me to hope. After six months I rose to honours, and gained the esteem of the noblest and most generous of men. The wavering Candians had begun by being rebels; they wished to make a traitor; I was kindly advised to retreat, and I fled towards Egypt with the generous pilgrim who had attached himself to me, and to whom I am indebted for present existence and honour. But in choosing Egypt for my destiny, I had still, oh de Lusignan, a secret motive, though I suspected not myself. Weak, vain, presumptuous, and rash as I am, do not hate me, my friend. There was an Egyptian lady, beautiful and engaging. I thought her innocent; with her I fled to Alexandria; I resisted the earnest prayers of the experienced pilgrim—I trusted mine own

deceitful heart; but where shall man stop in error, when he passes its boundary? I touched the bark, intending to view only the shores of Egypt—I touched the shore, intending only to view the pillar of Pompey—alas! I desired only to gaze on the charms of the magnificent Nourrayah."—"Nourrayah! ah!" exclaimed the Cypriot Prince; but he immediately said, "proceed."

"What, Sir, dost thou then know her?" cried Edgar. "No," replied his friend; "yet the name is not quite strange to me—proceed."—"This lady," continued Atheling—"but why do I speak of her?—Oh, upon what a gulf!—what passions!—what misery!—my heart beat—my mind was distracted—advice, precept, my country, my religion, my home, all nearly—nearly forgotten; she too that should have taught me the reserve of diffidence. But in the midst of my phrenzy, whilst headstrong emotion shook my reason, whilst my foot trembled on the edge of a precipice, heaven itself deigned—surely it was the intervention of heaven!—to interpose

in

in my behalf. I was struck with a dreadful malady—my soul was sick, and loathed existence; I raved and despaired by turns; yet even in this dreadful chastisement, a path of escape was left me; an interval of reason afforded me the means of escape. Though I was under correction, yet was mercy shewn me; disease balanced herself, and dozed, that I might crawl from those tremendous shores. Oh, Mameluke! I see thee now, as dark passion sits on thy pitiless brow—I hear thy terrible words—I see her distraction, and her sullied robe. Oh, de Lusignan! great Prince, thou who art one day to govern realms, and set a precedent before man—oh, de Lusignan! take caution from me. Behold mine eye still hollow, my cheek wan, my strength faded, my frame trembling in the agitation of recollected struggles, strong passions, and racking disease; behold me thus, and remember that the first breach in virtue leaves space for any assault upon the fabric of life. How did the cold dew encrust my poverished limb, and then what burning anguish succeeded; my tongue, how parched and

swollen! yet uttering the broken plaints of remorse, or the rude defiance of guilty conflicts — my soul as a hidden valley of the deep, on whose breast rise innumerable hosts of waters pressing with irresistible force, and howling with terrors exhaustless. Darkness, confusion, and dismay, rolled over me, yet in the midst of distraction was I conscious; but conscious only of existence and wretchedness. Nevertheless, oh Prince! though all the accumulated miseries of possibility had been aggregated round my head; though I had been locked up in earth's centre, and had, in my sorrows, heaved the ponderous mass and shaken even to the tall mountain pine in mine agonized effort, yet were I happy, and smiling in cloudless joy, to witness my great deliverance. Oh, my heavenly maker! thou who fillest the wide orbs of the universe with matter, and hast given them motion by thy word; thou who presidest in majesty and glory exalted above the widest stretch of human apprehension; thou who art omnipotent over the millions of enthroned seraphim of heaven; thou

thou whose seat is so high above power, dominion, and principality, and so dazzling in rays of awful majesty, that burning spheres and scorching suns are to thee as the black abyss; that the blazing cherubim who stand veiled in their radiant plumes trembling to dazzling grandeur, are overawed by thy effulgent presence; thou, Lord, exalted to this pinnacle immensurate of bliss and glory; thou couldst look down even to earth; and from earth, even to the dust, for a poor insect groaning under sorrow, violence, and despair. Thou couldst look down and compassionate; couldst behold the foot estranged from thy path and thee, and yet say, I will have mercy and not sacrifice; I will not destroy but fulfil. Oh, my father! who art thus immensely gracious and long-suffering with guilty men, accept my poor imperfect praise. I am not worthy to sound thy dread name, yet my lip shall bless thee; I am not worthy that thou shouldst look upon me, yet I presume to supplicate for thy countenance—I presume—not in my merits for thou knowest I have none—but em-

boldened by past mercy, and by the word of him, who said, " go and sin no more."

The Cypriot Prince folded his arms across his breast, and bent to the ground as the repentant Edgar stood gazing in wonder, love, and piety upon the etherial curtain of heaven. The fervour of his ejaculation lighted up in solemn brilliancy his imagination, and he seemed to view the planets swell from their limits, rush together in one pyramid of creation, and to hear a voice loud and exulting cry from them, 'we too are the work of his hand.' —" Yes," exclaimed Atheling, " ye too, oh stars! which break through the darkness of night; thou, oh pale moon, who art perchance the first model of a nether earth, formed as a sample of perfection; majestic sun, ye fiery comets. Yes, all may boast of the sacred impress of an omnipotent finger. Speak! stars — sun — earth — creation — speak—man shall join ye, and we will shout glory to the eternal.

The lip of youth glowing with piety and gratitude, was well pleasing to the ministering angels of night. They stilled the rustling

rustling tree, hushed the bubbling water, soothed the beetle to rest, and shaded on each side the breath of Edgar, that the Creator's praise might rise up, sweet, and uninterrupted, before the throne of mercy.

Atheling continued some time mute—gazing still upon the sublime arch of the world. By soft gradation, the transports of his ardent soul melted into tenderness and placid delight. Again he seized the arm of his companion. "Look upward, oh, my friend!" said he, "fix thine eye upon that sweet grey shade, which creeps gently forward: behold! now it gathers force, it advances, it darkens that bright planet; it obscures, it conceals—the orb is no longer visible. Does it not resemble the progress of passion in the human soul? Allurements steal onward with soft tender and gentle charms; we gaze, we smile—they gather strength and assume a deeper cast—still man retreats not; they advance, they overwhelm, they wrap in profound darkness. Rouse thyself, sweet moon! strengthen every beam, pierce through the entanglement—think not the first effort so

arduous! Ah! I perceive a silver edge, already bordering the dark veil, luminous points burst forth; thou art conqueror. But, thou moon, thou nature, who art all harmony, have I taxed thee with forgetting thy destiny, or the eternal law? have I likened thee, immutable in thy accordance, to man ever changeful, ever perplexing, ever forgetful of his maker and his immortality? Oh nature! have I so outraged thee? forgive, forgive me, proud works of perfection. 'Tis man only that rebels; and nature only under heaven, that turns not aside from her appointment."

The Cypriot Prince touched the hand of Atheling, and said, "my lord, I respect thy feelings, I perceive thou hast suffered—but time—a bride—young—innocent—gentle—affectionate—nor is haste needful. The princess is of noble mind—much beyond a year is yet in thy power—stay in the island—my father should return in six months. Meantime, all that is ours, command; forget thy misfortunes in the palace of the King of Cyprus; and by gentle attention, win the heart of the fairest blossom of the east.

east. My father already loves thee by report; he himself will smile to give the hand of his little daughter, and to divide the succession between his adopted and his real son. Speak then, Atheling, speak; that I may rush to the embrace of my brother."

The impetuous Cypriot with arms outstretched, waited with breathless impatience the answer of Edgar—he waited—he stamped with his foot—Atheling hung his head. "Oh, Sir, do you not reply?" said the eastern Prince, whilst eagerness, hope, and resentment, alternately sat on his dark brow. "Generous, and noble Prince!" cried Edgar, with half smothered articulation, "if thou knewest all that strives in my breast! I adore thy magnanimous sentiments; I cherish and exult in thy friendship—listen to me, generous Prince. No idea of the unhappy Egyptian, but what is made of terror and pity, lurks in my soul; but, oh de Lusignan, yet turn not aside, my friend—but other recollections—oh tell me; hast thou wrapped in thy memory the soft image which gave thee birth?

birth? Dost thou look back upon the fair maternal hand which parted the ringlet from thy brow to hide under it a kiss, and then folded thee close to a tender bosom? Was thy cheek when rounded by infancy's mould, never pressed by a fond father? And when the noble of thy parent's court stood ready to sever thee from parental embraces, and to transport thee to the colleges of England, did not thy young heart sink with grief and despondence? Was it not to me, that thou hastened with a sparkling joy in thy leisure, to mark the lessening time as it stood between thee and thy return to thy native soil? Oh de Lusignan, Edgar too, should have a father—heaven has also spared him a mother—he has a country—and he has also a heart—a heart which swells in gratitude to his royal host—which is throbbing in emotion at thy greatness, de Lusignan; thy offers to a stranger, a wanderer; poor, friendless—a repentant—an exile—and, what an offer! the hand of a beautiful princess for which kings might struggle—oh, de Lusignan, whilst I decline the gracious offers, how

do

do I wish that this heart could, for once, break its way and utter sounds, then shouldst thou know my admiration and love. Thou silver orb, lighten with strong rays the marble of Paria looking in feminine grace, from yon terrace. Turn this way sculptured and lovely representative of what once was; be seen of thy princely son. Let him contemplate thy soft feature, and remember the endearing caress of a parent; then shall his own generous heart teach him to find pardon for the ungracious refusal to offers so vast, when filial duty rises and pleads in its own behalf."

The Cypriot Prince on these words, raised his kindling eye upon the snowy statue which stood in the proportions of beauty and excellence, on a neighbouring turf. Every delicate feature of the fair Circassian, with the touching and melancholy strokes of youthful decay sat in languor round her braided tresses and transparent veil. The head drooped gently, and the chisel had directed the full eye to the ground, where it now seemed to meet her son.

De Lusignan stood silent and motionless.

Suddenly,

Suddenly, a dark body rushed by, and immediately a part fell to the earth—a piteous cry arose. The Princes started, and directed their attention to the spot: now a large wing flapped near, an immense bird groped on to the fallen, and as he discovered it, moaned, caressed it with his beak, and fluttered his pinion; then he lowly bent and stretched out his long neck to assist in replacing the heavy burden on his shoulder; he flaps the ground, he struggles, he rises, he soars, he is gone. "Behold, Prince, the stork!" cried Atheling, "behold him, riding to southern shores, perchance to Egypt, with his precious burthen— he bears on his wing a parent. Happy father with such a son; happy age, which is never chilled by filial neglect!"

As Edgar spoke, the Cypriot, deeply affected, turned away; soon, however, he moved back to the English Prince, and embracing him, said, "I have ever admired thee, Edgar; thou hast the open heart, the sensibility and delicacy of thy country, with all its undaunted valour.—I regret, but I yield to what thou hast urged;—yet, I see

a way

a way—remember, I expect here no refusal," added he, with impetuosity; " time to beyond a year is thine.—What canst thou do better than.....—Enough, to-morrow we meet—this night I give to my plan —farewell." The flashing eye of de Lusignan seemed to scorn a reply; he started up: plucked his hand from the retaining Edgar, who fearful to exasperate, yet shuddering in wonder, said, " What mean you, Prince?"—" I mean..." replied he, with raised finger, " fare thee well—to-morrow's dawn shall instruct thee," and he fled with haste to the palace.

Atheling attempted not to follow; he flung himself upon the earth, which still glowed in the warm kiss of the audacious sunbeam; he looked up, musing, to the azure canopy of his head, and sighing deeply, murmured, " What next, oh man, shall agitate thy bosom? What new emotion shall envelop thy wondering soul? What more of life shall teach thee to moderate thy wishes, abate thy fond hopes, contract thy wants, be ever prepared for reverse, and to tremble in the shade of pros-

prosperity? Oh, my revered father, my loved mother, if ye do indeed exist, when may your son again throw himself before ye, and on his knees crave one last blessing? Thou, oh de Clifford, where art thou?—what clime wafts thee breath? Art thou near the Prince, thy delight and England's? Or, art thou established by thine own hearth, giving a sigh to the memory of thine early friend, who has enfolded thee among the sweet blossoms of youthful recollection? Beauteous luminary, couldst thou speak, and that I might understand thy word, how wouldst thou tell of those, whose eye hath watered in gazing on thee, and in forming the tender wish that a kindred one was also fixed on the same point. Oh, heart of mine, whose slackened strings, and slow beat, shew the despondence, the inequality of man; and thou, my soul, which in melancholy strains reminds him of sorrows inherited, entailed, deserved! I praise ye, even ye, humiliating sensations, which teach man that he is not born for earthly happiness. I praise ye, glorious convictions, that man is

immortal,

immortal, and that earth is no place of rest and full enjoyment; for his soul is ill at ease in a mortal casement, and strives to soar to higher habitations. I praise ye, sensations that prove the right to immortality, yet suffer me to weep under the infirmities of man.

The dark lashes of Atheling's eye, were sparkling through a tear, when sleep crept over his limb, and leaning on his polished forehead, softly drew down the silken curtain over each visual orb. The respiration of Edgar grew sweet and tranquil; the motion of his vital harmony was restored from its depression; imagination rekindled —the cloud of melancholy was dissipated, and objects now rose before him natural and just, marked either with the yielding form and colour of fancy, or assisted by the retrospective grasp of memory.

There gradually arose to his perception, an immense tract of land, watered by intersecting rivulets, which bubbled with a soft murmur over the rounded stones of their clear bed. On the edge of these inviting streams, sweet flowrets smiled in ever-

lasting

lasting spring and perfume inexhaustible; over these tender blossoms hung the loaded tree, offering either a lofty shade, or nutritious food. The carpet of this luxurious retreat, was one downy bed of the tenderest green herbage, or the gentlest brushwood. Entirely around, sprouted coverts of thyme, sweet marjorum, violets, and pansies. The sun yielded to the enchantment, his brightest ornament by day, and the zephyrs suspended every interruption to calm and sweet joy by night. Atheling smiled and gazed, but the prospects changed: immense mountains, which had before appeared as a soft grey veil in the distance, moved forward, and he perceived their vast and rugged tops nearly shadowed by dark and lowering clouds, which, at intervals broke, and the barren heath, the hideous crag, the turbulent fall of waters, and the deep chasms were partly visible; rude winds shook the rugged soil, or intense heat dried up the struggling blade. Often the thunder howled through the crevices; often the spattering storm in shape of hail, snow, or rain swept forward to devastation

vastation and ruin. Edgar now sighed. "Alas!" thought he, "what a reverse to yonder happy scene!" He averted the eye; and as it fell upon the bright plain, he observed, that a multitude of creatures enlivened the paradise. They resembled young lambs in their form, countenance and motion. Some reposed beneath the sweet branches of scented blossoms, in voluptuous thoughtlessness; some lapped the sparkling edge, and then stood playful, or careless, to view the reflected images of the heavens, the landscape, or themselves, in the glass of nature; some sported together, and gambolled on the silken carpet; and some chased each other to the very boundaries of the plain, and then, weary with sport, fell into pleasant repose. Again, Atheling impulsively raised his glance. The mountain too, was peopled with creatures resembling the young kid. To them, enjoyment or security seemed unknown. The barren estate alloted them, scarcely afforded a supply to the moderate wants of existence, much less of luxury. Accustomed

to

to privation, to hardship, to dangers of the elements, to uncertainty, to reverse, they looked with patient eye, and moved with light and humble step. Did a small inviting tuft rise afar off? they sprang from crag to crag towards it, but yet with doubt and caution; and through life prepared for disappointment, repined not when another ray of light shewed the treachery of distant apprehension. Ever familiarized to danger, they lived prepared to meet it; and, as when the storm pelted round their heads, they suffered not themselves to be cast down by terrors, so, neither, when a breath of soft air ascended from the delicious plain, or a beam from the sun, enlivened their wild retreat, did they presume on perpetual favour. "Wretched animals!" thought Atheling, as a stream of electric fluid curled round the mount.

A light cloud now moved downward, and from it broke forth the semblance of a heavenly spirit;—a mild effulgence shone in his celestial visage, and benignity smiled in his aspect. Thus it breathed to the mind of Atheling: "Thou art rash, oh mortal,

mortal, in thy determination! Suspend awhile further judgment, and look towards the happy plain." Edgar surprised, directed his attention according to the command he had received.

In the air, immediately over the plain, he observed innumerable hosts of birds of prey, which fixed their keen eye on the assembly below. Thick mists hung suspended over some ill-fated heads, and disease, in the shape of a scorpion, slily marked her victim. The ravenous creatures of prey darted forward, and seized, in one stoop, hundreds of unprepared lambkins. Some of the gentle tribes that remained, gazed too eagerly in the bright streams, fell in and were lost. Some were stung by disease; and of those that scoured and gamboled across the soft turf, many fell into pits. Still in the midst of the calamity and danger, the general multitude that looked neither to the right nor the left, to be warned or instructed, continued unconscious of harm and heedless, to eat, to frisk, to slumber, till their turn came to be snatched away. "Turn thine

eye

eye to the mountain," the celestial guide seemed to say. Edgar obeyed. He perceived that the kids, though oppressed with evils, were nevertheless cheerful, light, resigned. From the high pinnacles they observed all that passed below, and they scrupulously marked the savage wings which rode for their destruction. Every chasm, every precipice, they avoided with care, and felt ever reluctant and timid in approaching dazzling verdure, or inviting drops. "Whether of the two wouldst thou be?" inquired the angelic voice. "Ah!" replied Atheling, "vain is the judgment of man. I behold mine error; much rather would I that my habitation were on the wild rough mountain; life is there less sweet, yet it bears more content; enjoyment is there more scanty, yet I might be taught from it, to feel the less when life should be relinquished." "Thou hast well said," the spirit replied; "and now, oh mortal! remember the lesson I am permitted to give thee. The creatures thou has seen are intended to represent youth. The lambs, those which are nursed in luxury

luxury, pleasure, and inactivity; who know not, or are prepared to endure want, suffering, deprivation, sickness, or decay; who, when calamities, in the shape of birds, flutter around them, either fall to rise no more, or suffer, with murmurs and impatience, the allotted dispensations. The kids, on the other hand, like thee, are accustomed, from their birth, to temperance, to caution, to humanity, to activity. Ills of every kind are permitted to assail them, and the possibility of destruction is ever familiar to their sense. Thus are they persuaded of the infelicity of earthly existence, and are prepared for reverses; and whenever they are tempted to repine, one gaze below teaches them resignation. Treasure up then in thy mind the example, and let the precept sink deep in thy heart. Thou too hast suffered—thou hast endured chastisement; life with thee may be darkly chequered, or it may brighten. In either event, presume not to question the ways of Providence, but hold to resignation—and if thou feel mortality wither under thy sufferings, give thy soul the support and

consolation, which alone are certain, and which no human hand hath power to wrest from thee."

The guardian spirit, as he breathed these words in the mind of his charge, intercepted his fervid reply. The lesson was ended; and he touched the inmost recess of memory to preserve the impression to futurity. Then he immediately assembled the beaming innocents, and appointed each to his charge; whilst he instantaneously unbent every stretched fibre of imagination, drew a veil over the inverted eye, and quickly gathered a mist in which to wrap every remaining faculty. Now Atheling drew gentler breath, he slept the unconscious sleep of inanition; and whilst every limb was anointed by the angelic attendants, and every function of life supplied and repaired by some, others stood to the nightly watch, carefully chased away the enormous-crested serpent which missed his scent; the baneful vapour, which lost its force; and the creeping tarantula, which forgot its sting. Thus sweetly reposed the young Prince;—and thus sweetly do the

the angels of Providence temper the lot of virtuous man.

The gorgeous sun had reared up his huge base on the resplendant waves, and had himself heaved from them in misty particles, a supply to fill the magazines of floating moisture,—had dispersed his cloudy stores, and covered them with various tinted webs, when Atheling awakened from sleep, and for a moment listened in pleasing surmise, as the turtle-dove plaintively held converse with her mate, in a neighbouring citron.

The memory, true to its sacred function and divine purpose, by sweet gradation now lifted the soft veil, and Edgar beheld on its pinnacle, enthroned, the vision of the night. Smiling and placid, he half raised his noble frame, and leaning on his manly arm, cast an eye upon the green carpet and fixed it; but as yet seeing nought. "Come back, sweet delusion, if thou wast one," said he; "return ye instructive images, ye that grew in my fancy, and still linger there, return; delight and teach me wisdom. I submit—I

yield; whatever be my portion on earth. Yet how amazing is the wide sketch of human capacity, even when the curtain of reality is but for a moment withdrawn!—How immense the faculty, which, when lassitude shuts it from an actual world, can instantly raise up an universe in its grandeur, or a fly in its minute perfection, by mere single imagination! Sun, moon, stars, cloud, skies, earth, magnificent as ye are, —roll on—ye have no mind. Air! thou wonder, thou miracle, felt but never to be viewed; vast in power, in substance nothing; thou that canst level the mountain with the plain, and raise on the glassy surface the stupendous pyramid; thou who art the feeder of life, and master of elements—thou Air, swell on! thou hast no imagination. Proud elephant, tear open thy breast, shew its centre beating perfect time—shew thy vital fluid, thy powerful nerve, thy proportioned stature, discover thy instinct so nice, so wise, so true, that we contemplate, we start, we pause, and then we smile grateful for our own good; As we say, thou bearest the touch of Omniscience,

niscience, but man alone received the breath from his God. Chaos fluttered—mountains rose—deeps filled—air swelled—vegetation burst—creation stalked—man moved—the blast from the Almighty rushed into his nostrils; he sprang up, he thought, he reasoned, he spoke. Imagination just kindled from the Godhead blazed through his frame; it endeavoured to run through infinity, and it broke forth in raptures of glory and praise. Sacred behest of the Most High! oh mayst thou ever be preserved, pure and unclouded, that the splendid gift of my Maker may return spotless and undefiled to Him from whom it came."

As the Prince finished, he rose up from his grassy couch, and perceived the chief minister of his royal host before him. Profoundly he bent as he advanced, and kneeling before Atheling, placed in his hands a roll of parchment, and a costly jewel ring. "Permit me," said the obsequious minister, "to salute the dust that is pressed by the favoured of my Lord. Viceroy of seven cities; I salute thee!" Atheling,

ling, wondering unfolded the scroll; and saw his name joined with eastern titles of power and grandeur; and that he was invested with the government of a whole province of Cyprus, to the west of the Olympus. "Thy royal master is infinitely good and gracious," replied the Prince; "but my age, my inexperience, my pursuits, disqualify me for a trust of such magnitude. Return, Sir, I entreat, with the deeds; I will attend the Prince." The minister, who had observed the countenance of Edgar during the pause, with anxious dread and doubt, now flung himself upon the earth, and embracing the feet of Atheling, said, "gracious Sir, be not angry, I must speak,—my royal master's words to me are these, 'return with his consent, or deliver thy head.'" "Impossible," exclaimed Edgar. The messenger delivered his scymetar—"strike, my lord, if thou wilt, but refuse me not. My master has sworn by a solemn oath, that he will not be thwarted in this matter, without a revenge upon me." "Stay then, Sir," answered Atheling, "I conjure you, a moment—let me reflect

reflect — if the thing were not impracticable....."

Then the Prince challenged prudence and reason to his assistance—"am I not an exile from my country," thought he, "for above a year longer! have I engagements or sacred duties, or even employment? and have I not been taught that vice is the offspring of idleness? I can fight, I can wield the sword, but should man be ever engaged in war? are not the acts of peace more sweet, the exercise of justice and mercy more delightful, than those of war, even when that war is defensive? does man live for himself? ought he not to exert his little ability to the benefit or improvement of others? and, above all, is a little difficulty to overwhelm him with apprehension, when he has such proofs of the support and goodness of Providence in every perplexity and danger?" "No," replied he, aloud, "Heaven be my guide. Sir, be pleased to lead on to the Prince, and give me the insignia of my new dignity."

The minister something encouraged, rose up, and profoundly saluting Edgar, con-

ducted him to his master; who impatient sat in the hall of state, surrounded by his council and nearest kindred.

The English Prince with a noble courtesy, saluted the throne of Christian Jerusalem and Cyprus. The impetuous heir instantly bowed, and with majesty addressed his council:

"Faithful advisers of the king, my father, and of me his son; ye know that seven days since, expired the governor of the western province of the beauteous Isle of Cyprus. Little did I guess when I heard the news, that my friend might be prevailed on to stay with us; but from his story which he last night gave me, I discover that his time is not secured for nearly two years. Friends! I have known the Prince in England, that famed country of which ye have heard so much; and I have ever respected him. On behalf of myself and the King, I offered him the hand of the princess, my sister; but his affections lead another way—still I ardently desire his stay; and I bestow on him the post so lately made vacant, for which I trust in your

your approbation. Now, amiable Prince, what hast thou to observe? or what wilt thou require, that we should refuse thee?"

Atheling blushed as every eye turned upon him; and he hesitated. The Cypriot Prince urged his reply, and at length, thus he spoke. "Most generous Prince, my heart strongly feels, but words are refused me, to express gratitude, not only for this mark of goodness, but for every benefit since my approach to these hospitable shores. Thy goodness was affecting in its tenderness to the sick; gracious in its condescension and familiarity to the guest; magnanimous in the project of investing him with purple honours and sharing with him a future kingdom; and it is noble in its offers of an employment of honour and trust to a comparative stranger, and an exile."

"Say not thus," interrupted the vehement Prince, "only speak to the question; thou wilt then accept of the authority?" "Sir," answered Edgar, with a respectful steadiness, "on three conditions only, can I feel it right to accept of this high and distinguished trust." "Name,

name them," cried the Prince. "The first is, Sir," rejoined Atheling, "that an old and wise counsellor be appointed to attend and assist my inexperience with sage advice; the second, that the post of honour be only continued to me from season to season, so that when time shall have loosened me from my banishment, or that other reasons may press me, I may have full permission to lay down my authority at the foot of the throne, and to depart whither I list; the third, that I meet not the noble and charming princess again, till the return of the king." "Enough, enough!" exclaimed the eastern Prince. "Be every condition accepted,—and this the pledge of my faith,"—and he darted from his seat, and brandishing high his sword, cried, "I swear." Then he presented it to Atheling, who pressed it to his lip, and instantly returned it. "Nay, my lord, not so; keep it, I entreat," answered the Cypriot, "and these two," as he slid the signet of authority on his finger; and cast over his shoulder a costly broidered mantle fringed with gold.

Atheling

Atheling would have bent to the throne, but the Prince stepped forward, and prevented by embracing him; and having dismissed the council who did homage to the new governor, the Princes departed from the hall of state, and, having visited the bath, sat down to refreshment.

Edgar anxious, thoughtful, fearing lest he might have cause to repent of his precipitance, ate but sparingly, and conversed still less. The impetuous de Lusignan, already commanded a royal guard to attend the English Prince, and a large retinue of slaves. Atheling sighed as he heard of these appendages of office, and already half-repenting turned away to seek the old pilgrim, whom he had not perceived since the evening before.

Leolf was seated on a mat by the palace gate, scrawling on the sand. He frowned when he perceived Edgar, but spoke not. "Good-morrow! my friend," said the Prince, "I wish to converse awhile with thee. Tell me, what wouldst thou think, should the King of Cyprus invest Atheling with the government of a province?"

"That it should seem as though he had dark designs on him, and I should think he would refuse;" muttered Leolf. "And why so, my friend?" said Edgar; "give me thine arm, Leolf; and let us together pace the long valley of cypress yonder. Methinks, I would wish to hear all thy suggestions." The old pilgrim suffered himself to be raised by the youthful hand that was stretched towards him; nor could he thrust out the ray of pride which shot through his cold breast, on observing the diffidence of the Prince, and the importance he gave to his sentiments. But Leolf shielded his inward satisfaction under a more gloomy air, and unresisting followed his noble friend.

The ardent eye of Atheling rested full upon the old pilgrim, animated by the flush of new-born projects, and yet tempered by the modesty of doubt, as he said, "Tell me, now, Leolf, I entreat thee; thou who knowest by experience, how to calculate upon the issue of events, and to weigh possibility in a balance;—tell me what, and all thou shouldst fear for Atheling,

ling, if he were to reside the term of his banishment in Cyprus. Neither friend nor stranger is near to listen—save ourselves; and for me, my bosom shall retain thy words, but further they shall never stray—this, by my honour,—I could add more, but, perhaps, Leolf is assured." Thus replied the pilgrim: "I obey, Sir; yet what will avail my poor words! I poor and worthless, I a wretched pilgrim, to advise with a Prince and a man of power: what should matter the words of Leolf; and who will say that he shall not suffer for his audacity?" "Oh Leolf!" interrupted the Prince, embracing him, "I will answer to thee; Edgar will answer to thee by his love for truth; his honour, and his life. Speak, Leolf; fear not; Edgar can bear plain words; his cradle was not the couch of flattery; no pernicious tongue ever approached it, to teach him he was other than weak and mortal—other than the pure lip of a chaste mother, or a generous and anxious father, never opened to his ear during infancy. Oh! my mother! thou who first taught me to love virtue in loving thee,

thee, art thou still on earth? or art thou beaming in immortality? and thou too, my honoured, my respected father." — Atheling looked aside, as the big drop rose in his eye. But Leolf perceived with anger, that the eagerness of Edgar was diverted from himself—he knit his brow, he murmured, but he was not heard. At length, with caution he said, "my lord, for what did you conduct me here?" "Alas! my friend," replied Atheling, "I scarcely recollect aught beside, when the loved guardians of my childhood rush with all their sweetness, their gentleness, their anxiety, their exertions, their sweet precepts, into my heart. Ah Leolf, did not thy parents quit this nether world whilst thou wast in infancy? else thou mightst look back to early life, and pardon my wanderings: sweet, oh very sweet, are the first blossoms of memory; every turf, every tree, every stone has its charm; but sweeter the bloom when beloved friends are entwined under every leaf. Dost thou not, Leolf, look back with any delight upon thy morning's dawn? does not thine heart beat

on

on recollecting some hand that delighted to feed thee; or an eye which loved to gaze on thine expanding stature? Where do the warm affections of thy soul rest, good Leolf? that I may smile on them with thee, or listen in sympathy to the relation of kindred love."

Leolf trembled through his gigantic frame, as the words of the engaging prince fell on his ear; his dark cheek took a marble hue, as the old blood flitted from it; his head lowered, and he sank on the earth. Edgar with anxious tenderness bent one knee, and pressing his cold hand, sweetly said, "if, oh my friend, I have said aught to wound the sensitive touch of thine heart, forgive me, generous old man; I respect thy grief, and will inquire no more. I fear I have, with the forward vivacity of youth, caused those venerable grey hairs to tremble. Pardon me, my friend and my preserver; suffer me to kneel for forgiveness, if I have dared to forget the privilege and honours of thine age." Leolf suddenly looked up: remorse and wild despair struggled in his eye; he gazed

gazed strong upon Edgar—he grasped his hand—he looked upward to heaven, and struck his breast; then he elevated himself, and stretching wide his arms, folded Atheling within them, and gasping with emotion, one immense tear gushed from his wide orb. "Enough," said he, "'tis done—the struggle is over. I have embraced thee, Edgar, noble and generous as thou art; I have given thee one embrace, perchance my last; for thou wilt fly from Leolf, when he has told thee his dark tale! Nay, start not—didst thou not ask me?—and 'tis but short. But let me hasten—yet, once more, give me thine hand—a last token of friendship; then I shall again say, Leolf may die unregretted by man. Now silence—hush—still as death!

"Thunder! where art thou?—flashes of fire, hasten hither!—Leolf speaks—Leolf relates his crimes! Stand back, Prince—our ties are broken: thou hast desired Leolf's history—stand back, 'tis policy; for thou too mayst be involved in the punishment, by associating with Leolf!"

The

The traveller, winding his way through fields and meadows, is overtaken by twilight; and, glowing in the warmth of summer's day, casts himself on the soft enamelled verdure, and hastily seizing a large mossy pillow, roots it up, drags it forward, and thereon resting his head, addresses himself to pleasing slumber. As Nature quaffs the refreshment, the sweet moon steals from behind a dove-tipped cloud, and dresses all creation in silver. The man, but half conscious, lifts his hand to stroke away the tickling curl over his forehead—it resists his touch—his breath is laboured; he applies the finger to his throat—a strong ligature binds it round; he endeavours to pluck it away—it slips from the touch—it recoils—it palpitates—it has warmth! Now he bursts from sleep with throbbing bosom, with glaring eye, with damp-chilled front; in trepidation he looks downward, around, behind—he starts upon his feet—when lo! from his head and breast hangs pendant the tremendous snake, which in many a fold, with envenomed tooth knit over the temple secures his grasp: the

the limb of the traveller flutters, ghastly horror creeps round his visage—the hairs of his crawling skin rise erect, and draw at their roots the rough pedicle.....

The locks of Atheling so stiffened—so horror-struck grew his mien, as he heard the dark words, and marked the strong remorse of the pilgrim. But Leolf observed him not—he gazed with scowling eye around, and shielding half his visage with his hand, cast a sidelong look on heaven. "Ah!" muttered he, "the firmament is serene—the thunder howls not—all is well, and I have time. Listen, Edgar; I would have thy good wishes, nay, thy prayer, if abhorrence will let them pass; perhaps—perhaps thy compassion: and if so, thou wilt pray for me—for oh, Edgar, I scarce remember the day when I dared supplicate for myself. For these I speak, for these I unfold past deeds; long, long has my soul laboured to give utterance to her griefs, but it dreaded eternal vengeance."

"Atheling, thou hast to thank heaven for its best gifts: virtuous parents, and good

good precept in thine infancy—these, had Leolf had, he too might have been like thee. Yes, Prince; Leolf can turn to days of childhood, and he too might feel the invigorating glow: but alas! ere the smile be suffered to rise on his parted lip, remorse steps between, and curdles the emotion: like the northern blast, which crisps the genial fluid as it falls. Yet I had a mother—Atheling, I had indeed—and I knew a mother. Oh, mine eye, wherefore so dim—pretend not to shed a tear—thou art Leolf, remember! Whence the stream? gush on: thou art not water, water is pure, and Leolf is stained, deep stained, in guilt—but time wears—listen.

"My mother was young and lovely, when her father, a noble Cambrian, took her with him upon a foreign mission. Long he remained absent; and, as he wished to court attention for his only child, adorned a noble palace, for her use and pleasure, on the banks of the Ebro. Here his daughter caught the admiration of a native of Spain, who by perseverance and various stratagems won her heart. The lady's father

ther forbade the union, disliking the man; but the marriage was nevertheless solemnized; and when the old father, bowed with grief and vexation, returned to England, his children accompanied him, and death soon put an end to his cares.

"Soon I appeared. Magnificence gathered round my birth, yet was no one happy. Happy, ye fiends of wretchedness! Behold how imprudence leads to fault—fault to sin—sin to misery—aye, even Leolf can say this. Why did the old man conduct from her native home his inexperienced child? Why, when he had been thus imprudent, did he allow his pride, his accursed pride, to environ her with grandeur and adulation? Here was the imprudence: the maiden was caught, entangled; she rebelled against her parent—she broke the first law of nature—and surely, even I may say, can happiness follow sin? Where is the world that respects the rebellious child? Should man, for whose sake she rebelled? —never. Who respects a parricide—aye, who? And she broke his heart—her father's!—Hold, thou vile tongue—ah! what

said

said I? what dreadful word burst from me?—Peace to my gentle mother—peace to the unhappy—not to the old father!—Barbarian! 'twas not thy child that murdered thee: 'twas thou, by thy vanity, thy pride; why display her charms? why court applause? What mattered it, that foreign nobles saw and praised her beauty? Infatuated old man! oh, may the spot which thy foot touched on Spanish land, be ever barren and withered! May the palace, in which was offered thy daughter for vain sacrifice, fall down, one confused horrible mass of ruin!—may...."

Leolf stopped, gasping for breath. Whilst the Prince horror-struck, pale, and speechless gazed upon him—soon he continued:

"Pomp and grandeur attended my infant days; and domestics, a venial train, perpetually warped my opening faculties by strains of flattery and meanness. Once daily, for a few moments, I saw my parents. My mother was ever trembling and in tears; my father stern, haughty, jealous, passionate. I dreaded the interview, and fled whenever they approached my chamber.

By

By degrees, my character unfolded: in vain did any alarming indication arise; no one reflected beyond the instant, and I was, by turns caressed, hated, punished and flattered, for the same error. As I advanced in age, my father saw me oftener; and noticing the arts I practised to avoid him, conceived the idea of teaching me every clue of suspicion, and of making me exercise my talents on my mother, whose faith he mistrusted. Oh misery!—misery!—and yet, when I reported imaginary wrongs to my vindictive father, and received his caress, my heart at first exulted not, but tears gushed from me, poor fool that I was! in fuller growth, this tenderness of conscience—conscience—pshaw!—'twas gone—and I could suspect angels without a blush.

"I had a brother—neglected too like me, but less flattered—better inclined—more loved, the viper! by my mother. 'Tis but faintly speaking, to say I abhorred him. Yes, he was my hatred—my aversion—like a deadly blast he withered my hopes while they were yet green and tender; but

he

he paid the forfeit—hush!—oh! well—well he merited.....

"He addressed a lady whom I thought too lovely for him—I supplanted him—prevailed—and married. My brother reproached me; I scorned and defied him—we fought—I struck him, he fell and rose no more. Oh justice! oh retribution!—I fled my country; in twelve months, I privately returned—I watched my wife—methought she was too happy in my absence. She nourished my son, and her health was tender—yet I reflected only upon her imagined guilt, and bursting from my concealment one night with an unsheathed sword, pointed to her breast, and desired her to confess her crimes or die. She sprang forward, and fell senseless at my feet—her lips never more unclosed in speech, and in ten days, she and my son were deposited in the cold earth. Cold bed and dreary; but not cold enough for Leolf. Wretched in misery—wretched in his enmity to the dead—wretched in his hatred to the living—yet time—even time alters nothing—forty years are fled—yet the deeds are fresh—

what

what is time to Leolf? What avails his pilgrimage?—Alas! my unhappy mother still pining in a convent—horrible catastrophe —and her husband—yet she would go—Leolf prayed her not—and her reason gone —flown for ever. Oh Prince! oh Atheling! pray for me; pray for Leolf—thou owest much, thou hast had parents. Oh! if precept had gilded my early day—if only one generous lip had taught me goodness, perhaps, perhaps I might yet have been saved. Even I—even I can remember to have wept in my childhood with joy, to see my father smile—yes; once he smiled on my mother, and pressed her hand on his breast. She burst into tears; a wild joy shot through my veins; I ran from the apartment, and hid myself in a little chamber, and in the fulness of my awakened tenderness, tears gushed down my face too—I bent to the earth my young knee, gazed on the heavens, and said, "God who art, as some one has told me, above, and canst do every thing, let, I beg of thee, my father and mother be ever kind as they now are." I rose up, beaming in hope

hope and good will. Oh! that some generous tongue had spoken!—that some good precept had fallen on mine ear, to encourage me to goodness. I returned to my mother unbidden. She was ill—to the servants, some of whom called me peevish for having the marks of weeping. Some spoke harshly of my parents, and the others fearful lest I had been hurt, cautioned me not to complain, and flattered me by praises and condolence. Whilst, disdaining them all, and knowing not right, I was disgusted with wrong, and more haughty and imperious than ever, I accepted the bribes, hated the givers—shut up my feelings in my poor breast, and lived a wretched life of grandeur, sin, ignorance, and misery. Oh! that I had died! when the first sweep of air inflated my breast, and raised the piercing cry of a new-born babe; or, that the matron who swathed my limb and gave me to a father's arm, had first circled round my little ductile throat her strong hand, and so had stopped the beat of life, and left only the black print of her heavy finger—oh that....."

Leolf stopped his mouth, fixed wide his glaring eye. Edgar shuddered, and leaned speechless against a tall cedar. "Is he really a man! heaven have mercy—oh dreadful! most dreadful! God, what am I that I was blessed with precept and sweet example in mine early life? Oh mercy—gratitude—pity—joy—might I not have been as guilty?—Look down, just angels upon him, and plead at the throne of mercy and redemption—and thou, oh Omnipotence! accept my humble and grateful sense of thy mercies—mercies bestowed ere I knew their value, and all arising in the virtue of my parents. Happy the offspring favoured through the authors of their existence. Happy children who can refer back every enjoyment to the solicitude of their parents. Humble me, oh heaven! in mine own idea; make me sensible that the only difference between the unhappy pilgrim and myself is, that whereas his parents were faulty, mine good. Had I been born of his, and he of mine; oh! might I not be to the full as guilty—oh dreadful! my heart sickens—I knew not that a tongue durst

durst utter such words—I knew not—I thought not--what perplexing ideas!—and to live thus long in crime—oh that my soul were calm to resolve and to speak to him. Thou, my good spirit, for we are taught that angels deign to instil good notions into the human soul, if thou art near, instruct my fluttering reason. I would speak comfort to this unhappy man, but I dread to arrogate privilege to myself, I who have so often rebelled against my divine monitor, I who am a weak insect, dread to be severe and proud to the unhappy and the self-abased. Yet does my soul recoil on his deeds; I would console him by words, but my tongue will not move for horror. I would look upon him, but mine eye will not bend his way: I would raise him from the earth; but he hath cursed his own existence—he has—oh angels of men teach me—instruct me—raise in my soul at once a pity for his sufferings, and an abhorrence of his crimes."

Thus thought Atheling, in all the beauty and delicacy of severe virtue. Tears gushed from his labouring breast, and, as his

soul grew calmer, the angelic guardian of his days advanced unseen, and pressing him invisible in his chaste embrace, infused through his generous mind a soft relief. The Prince, animated by the angelic touch, raised his head, and instantly he moved, with the majestic step of virtue, towards the wretched pilgrim. "Leolf," said he, with calm sweet severity, "clasp not thy hand to me; for how shall mortal frailty dare to sound the condemnation of its brother! Yet, Leolf, though I dare not say, that the perfect Redeemer will not receive thee repentant to his bosom, yet do I shudder over thy deeds; and my voice trembles lest it should presume to flatter thee. God is a God of mercy, else might no mortal hope. Thou hast suffered much —but, oh Leolf, pardon me! I pity thy reverend age, and thy grey hairs. Thou hast rendered me kindness; which, hadst thou even still more crimes on thy head, they should never cancel my gratitude. Oh Leolf! I pity and would advise with thee, not presuming on my better life, God knoweth my means of improvement, and

and my unworthiness; but as thy friend, for I still love thee, not as Leolf, but as my preserver, I pity thee, not as thou art man, but as a sufferer. Leolf! repent. Alas! forty years of pilgrimage — have they softened thy heart? — Didst thou not, oh, Leolf! cast too strong reflection for a repentant Christian on thy father's memory, and on the father of thy mother? Leolf, pardon me—humble, I entreat of thee, thyself before the throne of heaven —conquer and subdue, oh, hasten to subdue every rankling prejudice against the unhappy authors of thine existence. Pray for them—pray for thy departed brother—beg, earnestly beg for mercy, and I will kneel by thy side and fervently join with thee."

Atheling, with beaming sweetness, as his words melted into the Christian, held out his pure hand to raise the guilty man, who had buried his visage, unable to support the grandeur of virtue. Edgar touched his shoulder as he spoke. Leolf suddenly rose at the last sentence—his large eye rolled in fury—foam burst from his mouth; with

stiffened arm, he tossed the proffered aid, and with a desperate struggle, cried, "I pray for him? I plead for my hated brother, the cause of all my misery? Never. May my tongue ere it pronounce a blessing on him, be iced in cold—may....."

The guardian spirit quick perceived approaching, with rapid wing, the avenging angel of the Almighty; and as he looked severity, the guardian of man, said, "I salute thee, minister of Omnipotent will." "Peace be to thee," returned the other; "my errand is to justify the ways of God to man, and to shew thy beloved charge, that however the Great Creator and Father of Mercies may permit the wicked to live, to sin, or to prosper for a time, that the day of retribution shall come, when long proffered mercy shall be shut out for ever, and the Majesty of Eternal Justice be asserted. The wicked, thou well knowest, are often permitted to live and triumph, but to further the secret purposes of heaven. This man hath been useful to thy charge. He is now no longer needful, but by his end, to impress another lesson on mortals.

The

The ministering archangel of to-day hath given me command from the throne, to strike. Fix now the attention, I entreat, blessed spirit, that the prince may see, may learn, and may for ever remember the dreadful judgments of an offended God."

Atheling, pale with horror in the action and words of Leolf, would have rushed from him, but he felt restrained by a secret power. With eager dread he gazed. The pilgrim remained distorted by the fury of passion; his jaw suddenly strained wider apart—he roared aloud—he threw his hand on his side—a whole tide of black blood spouted with dreadful noise from his mouth. "God is just!" cried he, "Oh horrible, dreadful eternity!" He stopped. Every string that supported his throbbing heart in a moment burst, cut asunder by the celestial two-edged sword of justice. He rolled forward in the dust, and his impure essence instantly dislodged from mortality saw the angels standing, trembled, crouched down before them, and rushing onward, was caught up by the ministers of death to be reserved to the last great day.

The Prince grasped his hands; on one knee he fell; he essayed to speak, whilst large cold drops swelled round his face, and fell to the earth. "Without one hope, oh, Leolf!" at length he murmured in low tremulous whispers, as he looked wildly on his expiring struggler. "Hast thou not one little hope?—Speak Leolf—speak—strive.—Oh God! mercy, mercy for him—look upward—say but mercy—ask for mercy, thy soul is rushing to its tremendous judge—a word, Leolf! one word! Great Almighty, 'tis done! and his soul stands now already before thee! Oh, Leolf—Leolf!"

Edgar now fell senseless, overcome by his emotions; and the royal guard, who had witnessed at a respectful distance the whole scene, quickly advanced to his aid. They threw on his face some water from the fountain, and he speedily recovered. The first object that met his sight was the corpse of the wretched pilgrim; and turning from it, he covered his face and slowly moved towards the palace. Scarcely was he arrived, when de Lusignan met him, and

and made hasty enquiry into his terror. Atheling, in few words, explained the sudden decease of Leolf. "Cheer thyself, if this be all, then," said the Cypriot—"look not so mournful; 'twas an old man, and death is sometimes sudden with the aged; he shall be interred on the spot where he died—we never pace the dark cedar and cypress grove. Come, Atheling, I would converse with thee." "My lord," answered Edgar, with solemn air, "permit me to meditate on this awful lesson. My desire is to be alone this day. The pilgrim has been my friend—I have loved him. Whatever be his sins, God alone is his judge; I am a mortal, and owe him the last proof of humanity and respect. Favour me, I beseech thee, with one of thy ministers of the holy Christian Church, and I myself will, with the sharp tool, prepare his bed of earth."

The Cypriot bowed, impressed with reverence in the greatness of his friend. Atheling waited for the man of religion, and then mournfully advanced with him to the spot. Then he began to dig the space,

whilst his reverend companion knelt bythe deceased, and repeated, in low accents, the funereal orisons of the dead.

Atheling for a time threw himself on the earth and wept; but, as the religious man ceased, he rose up, and began to open the cavity wherein to hide the remains, which already, in the heated clime, began to require sepulchral oblivion. The pit was now ready, and Edgar approached the corpse suffused in congealed gore; the reverend father aided him, and together they deposited it in the last bed. The prayers now recommenced; the dust was precipitated upon the corpse, and soon it was lost for ever to the perception of mortality. The religious continued some time in meditation, and then slowly retired.

The Prince remained alone, and seating himself by the new-made grave, wholly resigned his mind to reflections upon the awful event of the day. "Oh, Death! solemn and great catastrophe of the world, which art to strip off every fancy, and shew the illusion of every false hope; thou whose stroke can sever us from all we love,

to

to all we dread; from man, who is our equal, to Omnipotence, who is infinity. Oh, death! ever awful to the good, but appalling to the wicked; fearful even in the gradual approach of sickness, tremendous in the sudden shock—Oh! how shall man live so as to welcome thee at a moment's notice? Who is there that shall lay his hand on his breast, and say, "I am ready!" If any dare utter such, oh, my father! teach me the life he should follow; instruct me in the means he should employ to subdue the frailty and corruption of his nature; teach me, oh, Divine wisdom—so instruct me, that if it should please thee to strike me from the existing in a moment, I might dare to hope in thy mercy, though I should tremble in thy presence. Oh, thou who hast favoured me in my descent from virtuous parents, melt my heart in gratitude and piety; and when my rebellious passions stir within me, oh let me be taught to recollect, that thou hast only to raise thy hand, and the soul springs away with all its deeds, guilty or righteous, stamped on its front, with which it must stand in thy

sight, for rewards immortal, or punishment everlasting."

So meditated Atheling, with a devout solemnity, and christian humiliation. Till midnight he meditated and prayed; and then, by the lustre of the unclouded moon, he slowly sought the palace, where he entered unnoticed in his chamber, and retired to rest.

When the Prince awoke the next dawn, he resolved to solicit leave from the court, immediately to depart to his government. "Let me dread to live without occupation, or I frustrate the great end of my being, and disregard precepts that ought to be sacred," thought Edgar, as he sprang from his couch, parted the drapery of the casement, and looked out upon happy creation. Two turtle doves flew near him, in quest of food; some bees hummed in the air, and lighted on the myrtle blossoms close by, to gather sweets; the virgin heron, domesticated in the royal gardens, flapped her wing, and drove her long beak through the artificial swamp; whilst the smaller gay feathered tribe lighted on the black

black bed of mould, or imbibed the drop on the edge of the fountain. " Industry, then, is the order of creation," said Atheling; " providing for itself and its young is the sum of a brute's life; its duty is small, and it is punctually fulfilled. But the end of man is to provide for the present and the future, and to benefit others as well as improve himself. No man exists for himself alone; even if he have neither child nor parent; in an enlarged view every man is his brother; and, according as he himself has been blessed with instruction, so should he impart the advantages to others, and so measure his responsibility. And thou, Edgar, art thou employed? To what advantage dost thou live? where is thy industry? where thy works? where thy obedience to a father, who commanded thee to look on idleness with horror?—Enough; I have opportunity, I will find exertion."

The Prince no sooner met his royal friend, than he respectfully desired permission to enter upon his employment. " So soon? well, be it so," cried the impetuous de Lusignan, " and I will accompany thee

to

to thy residence. Let the coursers be ready," commanded he, "and the attendants; we will depart ere noon."

The chief minister received the command with profound submission, and quitted the saloon. Dissatisfied in the simplicity and unaffected virtue of the noble guest, he fled with precipitation to the chief of the slaves, and desired her to drop hints in presence of the young princess, that might alarm her for the absence of Jerusalem's heir. The lady Berengaria instantly dispatched a messenger to her brother; and as she ran to his embrace, said mournfully, "why should my brother leave me? Since the stranger will depart, why not allow him to set off alone?"—"Lovely Berengaria," replied the Cypriot, "I wish to shew him honour; he is my guest; and moreover I have given him, in my name and that of the King, the government of the western district; only two days would I be absent from thee, sweet maid."—"Why doth the stranger depart so soon?" inquired the Princess, with a fretful sigh. "I know not, except it be," answered, smiling,

smiling, de Lusignan, " that he dreads thy charms; and as he dare not marry a foreign lady, lest he disoblige his parents, that he shuns a court and its brightest pearl." The Princess blushed; deeply she bit her rosy lip, and frowning said, " how camest thou, imprudent man, to know this?" The Prince again smiled; " suppose I had said, that kings aspired to my little sister's hand; and that he, in reply, had done my sister homage, in words of admiration, lamenting that his inclination were awed by duty." The Princess endeavoured to hide the dimple of her cheek, but it betrayed her smile. Yet was she displeased. " Brother, thou art very hasty and unguarded; why talk of me to a man? hadst thou not begun, he would not have dared to suppose so extravagant a matter, as that Berengaria, princess of Cyprus, should hearken to a stranger."—" 'Tis true, sister," answered de Lusignan; " and a man who, although of royal blood, will yet never wear a crown—he should not have said so much."—" Nay, brother, thou art severe," replied Berengaria; " methinks

thinks 'twas only courtesy urged him; for, brother, he is both modest and respectful. Prithee, what was the name of the English prince, who married a princess of Cyprus, whose name was. . .?"—"Her name was Berengaria," said de Lusignan, "and her lord was Richard, surnamed, from his proud courage, Heart of Lion."—"Ah!" replied the Princess, glowing still deeper, "'tis very well; pray do not leave me—I will weep myself to sickness if thou depart; let the proud guest retire."—"Why dost thou call him proud?" interrupted the Prince, hastily; "has he in aught offended thee?"—"Oh, brother," answered Berengaria, "did I not tell thee he was modesty and respect! What aileth thee, my brother? Promise me to stay, and the sweetest festival shall enchant thee this evening; I have ordered soft music, and the gay dance; two cunning men are this day arrived from China, skilled in wondrous feats; and I would that thou be present, to hear the sweet song of the beautiful Circassian slave, that my favourite yesterday bought me. Promise me to stay,

for

for I like not the influence thy guest has over thee; I know if once thou leave me, I shall long mourn thine absence."

The eye of the Prince sparkled, as the lady soothed him with promise. "I obey thee, my little sister," said he, with ardour; "I go and bid him farewell, and I return to thy pleasure." Then he pressed her hand, and hastily left her, still half-dejected and discontented. With ready invention, he gave the excuse to Atheling, who implicitly believed, and acquiesced. And now the retinue filed in order; Atheling assisted the old man, who was selected to be his minister, to mount, vaulted upon his courser, the Princes affectionately saluted, and distance widened between them.

The luxuriant island, tasselled by the venerable Olympus, spread before Edgar its fertilizing scenes. On the second day the city of his government slowly rose in his view. He still passed on, and entered the Paphian province; and as he gazed around, his ready mind pondered on the changefulness of history, and the revolutions of ages. "Oh, famed Paphian Isle, what

what changes hast thou undergone! Thou that wast once annexed by Egypt* in the train of her dependants; when a Sesostris might make thee tributary, and drag forth thy children into bondage, to rear the stupendous pyramid. Then the haughty Persian reduced thy beauties to his yoke, and bade thy nine kings bow to him. Then the superb Greeks snatched thee to their list of nestling isles; and a Lycurgus, or a Sophocles, might honour thee with consideration: so sprang the beauteous fiction, which gave energy to native talent, and raised for thee the magnificent temple, and the exquisite statue. Thus, by favouring thee with every thing of enchanting and lovely, imagination made thine the sweet residence of a creature of female sex, and the queen of beauty and grace. Such was the delusion! and even when the proud chain of the Roman dominion was flung over thy little neck, still the heathen respected thy pretty and engaging dreams, and bowed before the altar of imaginary loveliness.

* Rollin's Ancient History.

loveliness. Then the generous and magnificent crusade kings touched thy shore; Richard, the noble hearted King of England, punished thy cruel king, married his daughter, and bestowed thee on the house of Lusignan, a christian monarch, to rule in happiness over a christian people. Long mayst thou flourish, little isle, in beauty and luxuriance; thou hast native riches, and mayst thou continue long to hold rank among the insulated shores of the Mediterranean."

The Prince alighted at the entrance of the palace; silence reigned in the vast court, and gloom and desolation spread around. As he entered it, a few meagre slaves stepped trembling forward; Atheling spoke kindly to them, yet they made no reply; he desired to survey the apartments, and was instantly conducted through a long range, in which was every mark of neglect and ruin. The baths choked up; the marble founts without one drop of chrystal fluid; rooms dismantled of conveniences of life; no carpet; no couch for repose; no

no utensil for the preparation of food; —neither comfort nor luxury.

The Prince, in astonishment, turned to the chief of the household, and said, "Could this be the residence of the last governor?"—"Mighty sir," replied the man with fear and trembling, "he lived here ten years, and died in this chamber." —"Yet," interrupted Atheling hastily, "I see nothing but wretchedness and desolation. Had he not a bed, a couch, even a mat to rest on? I see no place on which he might rest his limb." As the Prince spoke, he gazed around, and the slave, lifting up his eyes, smote his breast and rushed from the apartment. "'Tis very strange; what aileth him, think you, sir?" said Edgar to one of his retinue, who answered, "I know not, my lord, unless he is guilty of the dilapidation complained of." The Prince, dispirited with all he met, remained silent, and turned to the large and naked hall. Presently entered a man, dragging in a female veiled, accompanied by several children, they all flung themselves at his feet. The man looked up, and, pointing to the group,

group, said, " Behold, sir, all I possess on earth, you may ask for my head, for my children, my wife, but money we have none. Scarcely does the shed at one end of the palace suffice to keep out the autumn rains; food we have none; raiment we have hardly to shield our limbs. The province groans in its own distress, and is cold to the supplications of want in its universal poverty. Take then my head, for life, under continued oppression is misery." The chief of the household, as he spoke, ran and embraced his family; then breaking from his fainting partner, rushed to the foot of the astonished Prince, and baring his meagre breast, lifted his dagger.

" Hold, impious hand!" exclaimed Edgar, and grasped the instrument of death. " What wouldst thou dare attempt thine own life? What frantic rage hath urged thee? Art thou in need? Tell me calmly thy tale; is not thy governor a man? and dost thou think man should be denied access to man? For shame in thy rash meditated deed; tell me thy injury, and sheath thy sabre, I will listen to thy grievance

vance and perchance lessen it. Speak and give me thy confidence.

The man, thus encouraged, thought a moment, and then shaking his head, said, "I thought, sir, thou hadst been our governor, and then he sat on the pavement, mute, with folded arms. The Prince, touched with the words, mildly approached him, and replied, "Even so, friend; I am the governor; yet may I listen to thy wrongs, if wrong thou hast sustained. Shall not the strong protect the weak? To what purpose is man elevated above the common mass, if he exert not his talent for the benefit of every inferior? For what purpose doth man gather knowledge, if it be not to impart it again? The sun gathers up moisture, but to disperse it abroad; the earth gathers the grain to send forth tenfold, and thus man, who strives to live well, turns advantage of birth or situation to the profit of all within his reach; therefore hesitate not; 'tis true I am thine appointed governor, but I would also be thy friend: speak, and freely, for I command thee so to do."

The

The man gazed ardently on the Prince, he prostrasted himself three times to the earth: "Too much, 'tis too much!" cried he, "if he be really a man—not a governor; surely a governor never thus spoke—yet I obey. How shall I dare? oh, pardon the boldness of thy slave. Conrad the Mighty loved gold—he loved treasure—he..." "Speak on to thy own tale," interrupted Atheling. "Yea, sir," replied the household chief, "he loved gold, and he looked to me to procure him treasures for his coffer; he had too a minister who loved to extort from the people; I levied but with regret; he liked not my reluctance, and he upbraided me; I laid mine all before him—I offered, and yet implored mercy upon my family—he took every thing, and bade me depart in quest of more. Despair urged me to boldness; I said, 'My lord, every means is exhausted, save the ornaments of the palace, and . . .' 'Enough,' replied he, 'what need we these trifles? Begone; give me gold, no matter from whence.'"

"But to what purpose these riches? Had

Had the governor a beloved wife, or children?" interrupted the Prince. "No, mighty sir," answered Perseus, chief of the household, "he had not a single relative that he could remember; he rose up, it is said, from low estate, and by great thrift, and a service rendered the King, came at last to be made governor; he had no relative; happy perchance might it have been for us, could his heart have been softened by kindred ties; but he had no one to love, and none loved him. In time, all the interior of the palace was dismantled, and was reduced to its present poverty." "But to what then, dost thou imagine, could have been appropriated those vast hoards of riches?" enquired the wondering Viceroy. "Ample revenues," answered the man, "he transmitted to the royal treasury, but the bulk he laid by. As his soul was bent upon gathering wealth, so love of money produced in him suspicion; he mistrusted every man, and permitted no one to approach his person in his last days, save his minister, and at times, myself; his chamber was barred and fortified every night, ere he slept, and

at

at his head hung defensive weapons."— "Strange history!" said Atheling, "but where is even the minister? or, where the treasures? A man may carry nought when seized by death."

The household chief went ghastly pale at the question, and again fell on his knees to earth. "Mighty ruler," answered he, "I know not; on the night that the governor expired, the minister related to me the event; I had not seen the great Conrad for seven days. 'Come,' said he, 'and take a look at thy master; he is just struck by death.' I gazed for a few moments, in silence, but not in sorrow, for past deeds rose betwixt me and grief. His minister, in deep affliction, bade me depart, that he alone might perform the last sad offices for his master, and I obeyed; yet his tears, his grief surprised me, for he only of the vast population, mourned; he alone stood silent, when the melancholy shout of joy burst from a suffering people, on the release from a relentless governor."

Whilst Atheling listened, and revolved the tale, the old statesman, his councillor,

said, in a low voice, "Please you, my lord, let further enquiry be made into the transaction. The late minister did not shed for nought his tears; I see treachery, sir."—"Let us not, however, be hasty," answered the Prince, "'tis affecting to look upon the corse of even an enemy: this lowly condition that all mankind shall partake, forces a tear, and unmans the stoutest soul."—"It may be, sir, in some cases," answered the other, "but in this, methinks, there could not be much sadness for so miserly and selfish a man. But permit me, my lord, two or three questions." Atheling bowed in acquiescence, and the old man, stepping forward, said, "Where is then this minister?"—"He is, noble sir," replied Perseus, "constantly mourning in the tomb of the governor. He besides fears the people's indignation, and stirs not from thence, but in the night, when he supplicates from me a little coarse food, hastens up with wondrous affection to my lord's chamber, and towards morn, departs."—"What does he there?" demanded the old man. "I, guess he mourns

our master, for I once entered the chamber, and he was prostrate, since when I have never disturbed him."—"Were these coffers once full, thinkest thou?" enquired the minister. "I guess they once were, my lord," answered the trembling Perseus; "but on the day that Conrad breathed his last, his mournful servant, raising the lid of one, said, 'Alas! where are the treasures? I see nought is here. Oh, Perseus, a successor will come, and demand them of thee, and thou wilt be ruined.' 'It matters not,' I replied; 'if truth stand not my friend, I will e'en resign my life of misery.' Four days after was the palace forced by the populace, in hope of stores, but none appeared, and they departed."

"It is enough;" cried the Prince, "circumstances challenge our suspicion. I charge you, Sir," said he to the captain of his guard, "with a few chosen men to watch the departure of this recluse from the tomb; let him be seized and conducted to answer to the charges laid against him." And then turning to the chief of the household, Atheling continued, "first lead to

the sepulchre this band; and then order instantly to be slain six of the fat oxen, given us by the great Prince of Cyprus. Let them be divided into small portions and spread out at the palace gates by the dawn for the families of the poor, with a hundred bushels of corn. Let the trumpet sound through the city in proclamation, that all who want immediate relief, may find it. Let it also be made known that the new appointed governor is willing to purchase whatsoever grain, or necessary of life, may have been amassed by merchants or rich individuals, and so we will hasten to blot out the remembrance of want in an isle which nature has blessed with plenty. Haste then, Perseus; take what provision thou mayst find among our laden camels; satisfy thine own and thy family's want, and proceed to thine errand. For me, I retire till the morrow's dawn; my soul disdains food, whilst fellow man pines with famine."

The Prince so spoke and moved to the apartment of the late governor. Upon a heap of straw he threw his cloak, and stretching

stretching himself, was presently in a sound sleep.

The words of the generous prince still seemed to descend to the ear of the assembly. The household chief had heard, looked up, had seen him depart, and yet spoke not. His children and his wife fell on his breast, the slaves stood transfixed with astonishment. The minister retreated a step, and with folded arms and wrinkled brow, looked on the ground; but the royal guard, as if by one impulse, clashed their arms, struck the breast, and exclaimed, "well hath he spoken; we will obey our generous governor; let him command—our wills are his;" then calling to Perseus, they said, "to the tomb, lead, we will follow!" The chief of the household now started, flung his arm round his infant, pressed its cheek; then with vehement joy returned it to the mother, and with boisterous exultation beckoned to the soldiery, and rushed forward with them, guided by the evening star.

Meanwhile the ardent slaves drew to slaughter the bellowing cattle, which lowly

submitted to destruction under the strong arm of man; life rushed from the opening of the steel, and the carcase was speedily divided, and shares nicely poised in the balance of equality. The sifted corn was pressed in the measure and piled in heaps on a grass mound close under the palace walls. And now as the labours closed, and the vapours of night melted into the soft shadows of the crocus, the governor of Paphos sprang from his humble rest and hastened abroad, as the herald sounded the first trump.

The sounds echoed through the streets, and the wondering people starting, leaned pale and trembling on one another, to question what dire event might hang on the blast. The frightened female rushed to her husband's arm. The scared babe plunged its face under the tresses of its mother's head, or buried itself screaming under the fold of her drapery. The man himself perplexed, yet more cautious, essayed a smile of defiance whilst it withered on his lip, as he faintly said, "hush!" Quickly followed in loud tones the edict, read

read three distinct times; and then rose again, yet advanced, the trumpet's haughty note.

"Oh mercy—wonder—dost thou hear, my love? Let us haste; what angel has sent us relief?" cried the female to her partner. "Peace," again murmured he; "let me go, that I may listen. Governors are not wont to be thus bounteous. Conrad is dead; but the world may hold other Conrads." "Oh cease the dreaded name," whispered the affrighted wife. "Oh if the wind should catch up the sound of thy bold words, and bear them to the new Viceroy!—thy head would answer—in pity, love, be silent, as yon marble fragment which sleeps at our threshold—be mute;" repeated she, as her polished arms clung to the dark vest, and shewed the exquisite beauty of the Cypriot race; but her husband indifferent, amidst a blaze of charms, and disdaining the sweet equality of sex, broke sternly away; and with hurried step followed the lingering echo.

The crowds at length half assured, with anxious gaze mount the hill on which the

palace reared its magnificent head; a palace heretofore a temple, and dedicated to the Pagan Queen of Love.[110] With amazement they behold the vast preparation of food. With dread they raise the eye, and mark the robe, the sandal, the sword of the new Viceroy. Perplexed they gaze; not ready to salute, not presuming to speak; not willing to be silent. The Prince marked the confusion. Unattended by any but the steward, he advanced and thus addressed them:—

"Inhabitants of Paphos; subjects of the renowned King of Jerusalem and Cyprus; give ear, whilst your appointed governor, salutes you as his friends, his children, his equals. Listen; and justice and plenty shall smile again upon you, and joy reign among your dwellings. Paphians! stand up before your governor; is he not a man like yourselves? Hearken to him, he offers you subsistence — protection. He commands you to banish public sorrow and despondence—for he will relieve you of oppressive duties. Return to the daily exertion, and evening pastime, oh! my friends,

friends, secure in the reward of industry; and if neighbour trespass on neighbour; if man tyrannise over man, hasten to your governor, even to me; I will defend, I will shield you, and redress your grievance with the arm of justice. The palace gates will stretch open wide, from the dawn of day till noon. In the great hall, seated among my people, will I see the orphan, the widow, the aged, righted; and will hear with equal zeal the mighty noble or the lowly outcast. For the present, take this food, you that are sufferers from scarcity. Advance in order; take the small supply, and be thankful to heaven. Meantime, if the embezzled stores can be regained—the residue shall be employed when the revenues are transmitted to your king, in purchasing corn which shall be distributed to the needy. Return then to industry, to virtue. Prepare to meet the just and moderate annual tribute for your king, and with the remaining fruits of your industry, purchase comforts, enjoyment, or recreation."

Atheling thus spoke, and beckoning to

the slaves who held back, commanded them to assist in the distribution; he then withdrew; but no welcome burst of pleasure encouraged his generous soul. Not even one cold word of approbation met his glowing feelings; he re-entered the palace; and continuing on, pursued his way to the gardens, which were teeming with noisome weeds and long grass—he waited—Perseus soon stood before him. "My lord," said he, "oh be not angry with thy slave; the food is dispersed—but I no longer know the people—they approached me with caution—whispered—took up their portion, and hastened away."—"'Tis strange," replied Atheling, "but enough—let them be filled; I am content. Public duty first thought on, let us now consider the dignity of the court. Artificers and persons wanting employment may be sought for, to arrange the gardens and repair and order the interior of this noble pile. Let the poor inhabitants be offered employment in easy distribution. I, myself, will discharge the debt from the ample allowance of the crown to my own wants. Perhaps, have I been

been hasty in forcing these good people to appear before me. Let me rather strive to win their confidence by gentle degrees. Hasten, Perseus; see to thy duty, and thou shalt not long wait thy reward. Drop this in thy purse for the service of thy family and be vigilant." The household chief received the gold that the Prince offered him, and flung himself on the earth to kiss the massive fringe of his mantle; but Atheling presented his hand, raised, and hurried him to his various duties.

The Prince at the morning repast met Timon, and saluted him. The old statesman with coldness answered his enquiry. "Thou art not well, good Sir," said Atheling; "yea, my lord," replied he. "Thou dost not then," continued Edgar, "mayhap, think well of our embassy—the people are dispirited." "'Tis not for me, my lord," cried Timon, "to speak." "Oh yes, my good friend; I entreat so much of thee;" said Atheling. "Well then, my lord, I think you have been hasty; nay more—I think—" "Proceed, my good friend," said Atheling, "speak freely—I

dread not the truth—a Briton is accustomed to plain dealing, and can bear freedom of speech." "Then, my lord," said Timon, "I doubt you should not, Sir, have deprived yourself of stores for the people. You may never be repayed, and the people none obliged. Why, Sir, need we so much consider these beings, 'tis their lot, they must of necessity suffer—in the capital we never heed these complaints, and people grow tired of preferring them."

The fine damask of the Prince's cheek mantled deeper as he surveyed the minister. "We, Sir," said he, "in England, think differently. We are taught from our cradle to respect the voice of the poor, and to consider all men as our fellow creatures. I fear I have been too forward in speaking to the people entrusted to me; I should rather have let my actions have appeared first. However, the words are gone and cannot be recalled. All my hope is, now, that the Paphians will not refuse me well-meaning intentions; and that they will, in time, give me their confidence and regard. As for the trifle, respected sir, which

which I have caused to be distributed, I look not to payment—persons were in want, and I shared my abundance with them ; I claim no merit, and I look to no reward for having done a simple duty."

Upon these words, the minister coldly bowed, and gave no reply—Atheling waited a few moments, and then took the road to the tomb, to learn the progress of the night's inquiry.

In vain had the centinels knocked for admittance in the sepulchral chamber, no voice sounded— no noise, not even the sigh of wind through the inward crevices, rose on the ear. Edgar gently struck the entrance, for he respected the mansions of the dead, but nothing stirred. Then he walked round, and surveyed the whole mausoleum, beautiful as it was, and formed from the relics of antiquity,[111] which were scattered profusely round this favoured spot of earth. As he stood in deep reflection, an old woman approached him, and looking earnestly, said, " mighty Sir, will you suffer your poor slave to speak ; methinks I know your wishes." " Most willingly,

willingly, good friend," replied Edgar. "Then, Sir," answered she, "there is a cave long, winding, vast, which extends down to the sea-shore, near my little hut—in time of the first crusades, a hermit lived within, and the opening is under yon crag, as I have heard my father say." "Good mother," replied Atheling, with animated eye, "I thank thee—the matter is worthy of notice—truly I thank thee; call at the palace, if I can do aught for thee; and in the mean time, accept this trifle." "You have already served me," said the old female; "my only daughter lay stretched in sickness and want, and hastened upon the rumour of the governor's bounty, to take food and save her. I am now returning—'tis said, Sir," continued she, in lower tones, "that the old minister is hidden in this tomb—oh may you have success and find him, that he may suffer as we have suffered." "Hast thou any sons?" inquired Edgar. The matron drew round her scanty veil, fixed her dark eye, and said, "aye, Sir—sons? aye—and a husband—but—hush, my lord, ask Conrad where they

they be now?" and leaving the money that Atheling offered, she moved slowly away, muttering—"aye, Sir."

The Prince affected by the manner, gazed long after the woman as she tottered down the slope. "I fear all is not well; poor complainer!" thought he; "reason seems to be bending under the infirmities of age and the remembrance of misfortune. God help thee, what can make amends for the decay of intellect?" Then calling to mind her information, he proceeded to the captain of the guard. "Sir, I entreat you," said he, "station at the beach opposite the crag, a double sentry, that none pass that way. There is, it seems, a cave that is guessed to run up the land, perhaps, even to this edifice; and if so, our prisoner may escape to sea with the treasure. It might be well to explore the passage. 'Tis an arduous task. Perchance the men may hesitate." "I dare answer, my lord, they will comply;" answered the captain;—whereupon the Prince again bent his way to the palace.

Already was the long tendril that had insinuated

nsinuated its course among the dark mould, dragged up with force; and the strong weed rebounded from the hand to a distance, felt the sudden shock which stops circulation, and lets in decay. Sick to the core, the plant hung its dizzy head, and let fall in clusters the roots accustomed to be full-spread;—whilst man, fastidious in the luxury of creation, was pleased to despise its make though delicate, its little blossom though sweetly tinted, its winding leaf though perfection. Many hands already strove to clear the winding path of long corrosive grass, which audacious in uninterrupted sloth, resisted the strong effort, and enraged, turned a sharpened edge across the swelling finger, and received in greedy joy the drops of red blood that streamed down to its bed; but the joy was momentary; anger recoils upon itself; and the polished steel soon levelled the tall head in the dust. Nor within the palace, was man less absolute; some hands at one stroke tore the labyrinth of the cunning insect, or pursuing her from her web beat her down, and regardless of her submission,

submission, horror, or weakness, drove her hapless under the outstretched foot, which in an instant, crushed her tender bones, stopped the beat of her little heart, and drew from her delicate veins the fluid of life, with which a good Almighty had filled them. Some sweep down the drowsy chrysalid, that as a soft-haired moth had sought a security for the helpless days of torpor, which, from the admirable precision of her instinct—Omnipotent gift! she knew to be at hand. Oh spare her, generous man, spare her! the silken ropes with which she fastened herself to the marble cornice, are snapped at thy feet; helpless, unable, unconscious, she stirs not from before thee; yet is she alive; an invisible power adds every day a finishing touch, and in the daily list of animated Nature is she registered. Spare her then —give her liberty, and God himself will add life—toss her from the casement, to the thick beds of jessamine blossoms near it—let her live and rejoice.

The Prince sought the old secretary, and seating himself with smiling confidence, at his

his side, opened his generous mind; declared the plans he proposed for his people's welfare, and with modesty, solicited unreserved opinions and judgment. The old man frowning, desired time to reflect; and Edgar respectfully placing before him the tablets and pencil, desired him freely to alter and arrange, where a further advantage might be secured to justice, order, or the general good, and then left him.

Perseus now with downcast look and folded arms, met him; he would have thrown himself upon the earth, but Atheling commanded him to desist. "How now, friend?" cried he, "why this melancholy? Speak; why dost thou hesitate? If thou have done wrong, avow it; if others have failed, why tremble? Canst thou be responsible for all?" "My lord commands," said the terrified chief of the household, "yet, my lord, the people disdain the gift. Accustomed to receive aggravation, they mistrust kindness; they fear treachery. Report says the flesh is envenomed and . . ."—"Speak on, Perseus, and what?" said the Prince. "And, my lord, 'tis now all

all committed to the waves."—"And the corn too?" said Atheling. "No, mighty sir; the corn is devoured, having been purified over the fire."—"Well, and how matters it to me, Perseus, if the people love not the meat? they only are the sufferers." The Prince would have ended with firmness, but he could not. A big round tear floated in his bright eye, as he essayed in vain to give pride the triumph, but his great soul swelled in the sharp sting of disappointed feeling, and his tender breast refused long admission to ignoble passions; but conscious of rectitude, and beaming in universal love and benevolence, the suspicion and misapprehension pierced his manly heart. He turned away from Perseus, and as true feeling ever seeks to hide itself, he broke a wild flower from its stem, and with the semblance of amusement surprised his steward, who hearing no further reply, bowed and retired. "Oh, people of Cyprus! unjust," thought he, "how little do ye know the upright integrity of an Englishman's soul! how little do ye understand Edgar Atheling, the son of Mercia!

Mercia! Oh, sooner than practise upon ye one treacherous artifice, would I prefer that this heart in my bosom should suddenly stop, and vibrate no more; my eye grow dim and dark, and my limb be palsied to every sensation. Oh Cypriots, I would freely give my life, amongst ye at danger's call; but mine honour — to suspect my truth!—oh, people, 'tis cruel; nay, most unkind!"

The Prince could not endure the thought; he walked hastily, and plunged into a moss-grown copse; he flung himself on the ground, shook back the luxuriant curls that played over his irritated brow, and vexed to feel the rising swell of his bosom, plucked the delicate velvet of nature, and busied himself with its examination; but vainly did he look; a growing spring fluttered in either eye, and hung trembling on the oval edge; his troubled heart flagged to the contracted movement of despondence, and a whole tide of grief combated with the rising disdain and anger of unjust accusation; his respiration struggled in the contest; he lifted his hand and pressed it strong

strong on his chest for relief, determined to combat and conquer—but it was too late—the pearly drop fell, and bending his head into his supporting hands, he gave nature her demand.

But in a moment he rose, calm and relieved. " 'Tis well," said he aloud, " 'tis well. God! I thank thee, that by cutting short our fondest hopes, and secret designs, thou remindest us that this is not the resting place of mortals. Should we not forget that we are to die, that we are only men, if we were surrounded but by happiness here below, and if our fondest schemes were ever planned in the full certainty of being realized? No; 'tis well, that our best intentions be misapprehended, that suspicion rise on our unconscious integrity, that our words be distorted in their meaning from simplicity to artifice, and that the warm proffers of our souls meet coldness and repulse; 'tis well; a bitter lesson and hard to digest, but fraught with deep instruction. Yes, they are wholesome checks, even to me, who am a prince, a noble, a governor, absolute over the lives and fortunes

tunes of thousands; how easy were it to forget that I am but mortal dust, if I were courted, hailed, adored! Yes, disappointment befits me; but thou, oh, Father of Heaven, thou who knowest and provest me, thou knowest wherein I fail, and wherein I may have one merit; thou knowest that I am innocent of this crime; 'tis enough—I am content—I praise and bless thee."

The Prince gazed upward on the evening cloud; he looked around upon the wide world in this proud moment of appeal to the tribunal of eternal justice. His foot pressed the earth, and in confidence of his step, creation was hushed in reverence, as it felt that man had held silent conference with Supreme Majesty. "What are ye now, ye cares? Where are ye, disappointments?" said Atheling, beaming the sweet smile of uprightness, "Come to me—seize me—overwhelm me—my God himself supports me, his eye beams even down to me; it beams in comfort, goodness and paternal love.

"Oh,

"Oh, magnificence of religion! Oh, grandeur of piety! When the whole world shuts us out, thou art ready to clasp us in an embrace! My King! my God! and my Saviour! Language fails—I am silent."

Edgar entered the palace. The slaves stood by, and marked his placid dignity; and confounded, they trembled and leaned behind a pillar; he observed them not. The aged secretary was advancing, he looked up, but, perplexed, turned away; Edgar would have followed, but the officer of the guard respectfully bowed before him, "My lord," he uttered, and the cool grandeur of his auditor, abashed him; he cast his eye to the ground, and bowed. "Speak, sir, I pray you," answered Atheling, calmly, but with sweetness, for the ingratitude of the Paphians had chilled his ardour, "My lord," replied the officer, and hesitated, "the men have discovered the entrance of the cavern, but they dare not—they like not the dark appearance. They—they have refused to advance, fearing a spectre."—"Oh, poor timidity!" cried Edgar, with disdain;

disdain; "a British soldier, did he even feel apprehensions, would swallow them, and know no will but his commander's. What distance is the cave from hence?" —"Perhaps of an half hour's walk, my lord," returned the captain. "Be the task mine then, sir," replied Atheling; "I fear no spectre; darkness has no horrors for me. I will explore the cave." So saying, he tightened the breastplate that glittered on his proud bosom, girt on the shining blade of his beloved father, and swinging the furry-broidered mantle of the east around him, called for a thick taper, and crossed again the threshold of his palace.

The evening had swiftly passed, and night triumphed. She wore a dark grey, but here and there a soft swell rose bright, and inclosed in its bosom a virgin messenger from the queen of heavenly constellations. Atheling reserved, passed tranquil on. The captain trod at his side in respectful silence, and the inquisitive Perseus wondering in the scheme, followed at a distance. As Edgar arrived at the beach,

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he beheld the trembling sentries; then he stooped for two pebbles and quickly struck them; the tender sparks rushed out in every direction, fell upon the burnt cotton of the taper, and presently rose in a bright flame. "I imagine, Sir, this," said Edgar, advancing, "is the entrance; be pleased all to wait here; I trust I shall soon be with you—I will move forward and try how far the cavern winds." The men started back, and Atheling, with a fearless tread, entered the small aperture. All was still as death—he held in one hand the large torch, in the other, his sword. The vault soon widened, and the damps, pendant in dew or crust, reflected ten thousand brilliant images. No sound escaped, save that from the bat, which flapped her wings and hovered in terror, sometimes close to the rays of light, and fanning, made them vacillate. Suddenly, the ground rose in the ascent, and a rocky step now and then assisted his passage. At length he spied a thick wall, and as he arrived close to it, his progress was checked. Here the Prince stopped gasping for breath, for he had

walked with precipitation. As he paused, he saw the flash of another light, he caught the sound of another footstep. Surprise dashed his cheek; but his undaunted soul was firm and recollected—in a moment he distinguished the captain, and Perseus. "Pardon me, great Sir," cried the first, "I could not endure to see so generous a master unattended by one arm, even when he might have commanded hundreds in his defence—and Perseus here would needs accompany me." "What, my lord?" cried Perseus, "are you safe?—little did your slave suspect your design, or he would have gone foremost in the danger—'tis a vast cavern, long and dreary. I rejoice, my lord, in your escape."—"I thank thee, Perseus; and you also, kind Sir," replied Atheling, "now let us not wait for any converse, but diligently search; some entrance there must be to the tomb; assist to examine, and be cautious."

The Prince immediately kneeled down, and lowering the torch, searched close in every recess; he drew away a large solid stone from one spot, and groping, discover-

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ed a small door; the old hinge gave way; boldly he passed into the opening, still sliding and holding the torch and drawn sword. The passage enlarged; he could stand erect; another door of wood faced him, he rushed against it, and in an instant he was in the sepulchral chamber.

Atheling gazed around in wonder and surprise. He found himself in a spacious room of white marble, illumined by several waxen tapers. In the centre, was a table of marble, upon which, with the fragments of a repast, were raised heaps of gold and gems; and round the apartment were piled caskets of the same stores. The Prince looked on every side for the minister. He called with a commanding voice, that made the echo swell among the arches, and multiply his words. Again he spoke; but no reply was made. He listened; when a hollow sigh burst upon his ear. Perplexed, he lifted the rich brocade of a sopha; and lowering the torch, beheld the figure of a man prostrate. Edgar started, but immediately cried, "Come forward; stand up. I swear, on mine honour, Iw ill not touch

to hurt thee, if thou wilt deliver thyself —speak—rise—shew thyself; thy wretched life is safe at my hands." The authority of Atheling could not be resisted; and a meagre ghastly figure crawled forward, and, appalled in the majesty of the prince, fell on his knee. "Oh, abasement of human kind!" said Atheling, "is it then really possible? Is he really a man?"—"Have pity, have pity," cried the abject minister, "you have given me safety from the sword —give me my treasures—let me flee away; darkness will hide me, let me depart."—"And where, oh miserable! wouldst thou flee to?" asked Atheling, "where would thy narrow soul find happiness?"—"My life—my treasure—they are enough—I am content."—"What! is life welcome to thee with shame, dishonour, disgrace—when it is a thousand times forfeit to justice?—Amazing!" said the Prince, "and thy treasure? Think not so easily, and with so great impunity, the orphan shall be robbed of her patrimony, the hoary head pine with want, the tender mother weep over her child that cries for bread. No; justice commands

commands thee to be stripped of thy ill-gotten treasures, and commands thee not only to stand by and see the restitution, but that thou thyself should appear and answer to the charges laid against thee. I have, on mine honour, told thee, that thy life is safe from my own hand; but mark, it may be otherwise with an exasperated people. Thy blood is secure from my touch; nay, so far from putting an end to thy existence, I would even use my power to prolong it, as much as might be, to give thee time to humble thyself in penitence for thy sins; but the voice of justice is imperious;—yet will I befriend thee as I may." The wretched man kneeled at the foot of Edgar, and raised his hand to thank him. The Prince was turning aside from a soul so mean, when in an instant he staggered; the stroke of a sharp dagger flashed against his side, gashed his superb mantle, and entering a crevice of his unseen armour, drew forth a little stream of blood. Enraged, he looked round, and saw the weapon still in the hand of the assassin, whose countenance fell into des-

pair, as he felt the iron resistance—his eye glared, as he cried, "Ha! have I then failed?" The Prince, exasperated, lifted his sword, and rushed furious upon the quivering traitor. "Thou shalt die, perfidious as thou art," said he; and in a moment he wrenched, with a powerful grasp, the dagger, and threw it far off; then would he have buried his bright sword in his breast; but suddenly honour, sacred honour checked his hand. "No, base as thou art," cried he, "no, I will not stain my weapon with thy blood, though thou wouldst have shed mine, thou traitor! but thy life is now trebly forfeited; and as thy malice is so deep, I will warn others of thee, and prevent thee from harming them." Whereupon, he seized the robe of the traitor with one hand, and holding with nervous arm, the resisting limbs of his mean adversary, bound his limbs firmly round, and then left him struggling with rage, malice, despair, and revenge.

The Prince now called loudly, "Perseus enter; your enemy is in bonds; he must be transported to the palace. From my hands

hands he deserved death, but I have saved him for justice to punish. Come on—unbar the doors; troops are posted without. You, Sir," said he to the captain, "you will be pleased to command two men to convey the prisoner to the palace; meantime, we will shut up the tomb and secure its treasures on every side, till morning." Perseus, with timid step advanced, started, and hastily passed the fallen minister. The abject miser shut his haggard eye and groaned, but attempted not to speak. The ponderous hinges soon grated in the massive iron doors fronting the edifice, proof against the strength of man, excepting through the insinuating key. The astonished soldiers without, heard the sound, and started at the news. Two quickly entered and seized the offender. Atheling, with vast exertion, made sure the smaller doors, and then passing the outer ones, heaved them after him, and fastening, put the keys in his bosom; then, hurrying onward, joined the prisoner, saw him conducted to the state prison of the palace, and throwing aside his armour, staunched

his slight wound with some linen; then flinging himself on the humble couch, hastily prepared for him, endeavoured to bury in sleep the dangers and fatigues of the day.

BOOK XII.

THE MORAL.

HAIL to thee, Morality! thou beaming angel, which art sent on earth to bind man in links of harmony, as he pursues his vast or scant career; thou, who, Proteus-like, but with sweet intent, canst change thy name, fashion, and form, to win a way to chaste bosoms, or to rush through to a boisterous soul. Thou, who with the timid art, Gentleness; with the bold, Heroism; with the pious, Religion; with the brave, Honour; with the delicate, Chastity; with the dispassionate, Temperance; with the prudent, Caution; with the frugal, Economy. Thou, who canst shrink into a sentiment, or spread into a dissertation of volumes; who canst prattle to a babe's listening ear, or harangue a proud and haughty multitude; who canst swell in solemn pulpit eloquence, or smile in the tender language of a child's tale; who canst glitter in all the magnificence of law,

that shall bind the will of royalty itself, or that shall pass in the humble garb of a simple national ballad. Thou, Morality! without whom the ties of nature sleep despised, and the institutions of man lie disregarded, Justice needing a supporter, Truth being a deceit, Virtue a name, Religion a terror! Oh Morality! thou connecter of mortal and celestial, thou that standest between human and divine, and joinest both: I salute, I bless thee!

The Prince rose as usual with the dawn, and having commanded the great bell of the palace to sound, that the people might assemble as on particular occasions, vaulted upon his charger, and slowly advanced to the sepulchre, attended by all the guards and persons of his train. The massy gates were thrown open, and the ten vases full of gold were lifted between thrice the number of the strongest men; the treasures were piled upon an eminence, and as the people hastened forward, upon the rumour of passing events, Edgar thus spoke:

"Inhabitants of Paphos, subjects of the King

King of Cyprus! ye behold the fate of wealth unjustly amassed. Peace to your governor, for he sleeps in death; whatever be his deeds, they have escaped the reward or chastisement of man; but the minister is secured for a day of retribution, and waits in his prison the arm of justice."—"Give him, that we may tear him to atoms—that we may shred him in our vengeance," cried the Paphians; "give him to our revenge."—"Hold!" interrupted the Prince; "be silent yet awhile, and listen."

"The amassed riches are all before you, not a coin hath been touched; I am ready, I am willing to restore part of it amongst you. One third I transmit to your King, one-third I place in the treasury, for public use, the remainder is your's."

The astonished and delighted people lifted their hands, and murmured a burst of admiration. Atheling paused, and with dignity proceeded:

"But promiscuous relief is hurtful: and I warn you, men of Paphos, that the money shall be distributed with judgment and

care; six persons of distinguished probity shall be appointed to go from dwelling to dwelling, to gather an account of your wants, and to administer to every necessity. A portion to the fatherless, a pension to the aged, food to the hungry, clothes to the needy, relief to the unfortunate, medicines to the sick. Besides these private succours, I will myself be ready to hear every grievance publicly, and every day; and, if it be possible, to redress every wrong. Thus shall you be assisted; and thus may you at length be convinced, that my wish is your prosperity, my aim your happiness. Be content—be generous—cast off every injurious suspicion; none among you has reason to fear, but the guilty; for as my word is pledged for the satisfying of want, and the protection of innocence, so shall it pass for the punishment and detection of vice."

The Prince ceased, and the vast people, impelled by his candour, his promise, and his truth, durst no longer doubt. The men shouted in exultation, the women eager lifted up their infants, to view their generous

generous governor, who now raised his helmet, as he galloped back, surrounded by his guards, to the palace, amidst thousands of the exulting populace.

The noble heart of Atheling would have been touched with the praise, but he recollected the ingratitude of the preceding day, and the emotion vanished. "Oh let me not," thought he, "let me not be elated by a mere word which is offered to day, and may be retracted to-morrow! Wretched, alas! must be that man, who depends upon the caprice of a multitude for self-esteem. May that lot never be mine!"

Days fled. The arrangements of the palace advanced with rapidity. Order quickly took her seat in the residence of the governor. Time was portioned for duties; and with the revolving hour, was every thing by turns reviewed, attempted, or perfected. The confidence of the people arose and grew. They flocked every morning, to tell the chief their hopes, their disputes, their wants, their wrongs. Elevated in the spacious marble columned hall, upon

upon a chair of state, he listened with unwearied patience to the minutest detail of the accuser, and the defendant; and so cautious was he in determining, that even he who lost his cause, moved from the hall satisfied in the strictness of justice—even he, as he passed the gate, had sometimes a small gratuity privately offered, to assist in the reimbursements he might have to make; and this presented by the stationed officer, with an affectionate written caution against further intemperance. The poor were supplied from stores set apart for them, of apparel and food. Calamity was relieved as much as might be; the ravages of conflagration, tempest, or inundation, were immediately repaired by the efforts of the appointed artificers, and the contributions from the public treasure. An immense edifice was arranged for, and appropriated to the reception of the infirm and the outcast; easy works of industry were assigned to the last, and the profits arising to all were a private reward. Thus, in time, when prudence authorized, the person might depart from his asylum, smile

secure

secure in his own cottage, and dare again, perchance, on a return to temperance and sobriety, to raise an eye of confidence on the world.

The Prince could not thus strive, and strive in vain. The people, ardent, impetuous, strong in eastern warmth, which knows no resting place between extremes, the people shouted, as he passed the gates to walk among them—they rushed forward —they knelt to embrace his mantle—they sang in boisterous joy; unlike, oh, how unlike! to the deep-seated tenderness of British bosoms, which lies close in a throbbing tumult, and starts in broken pauses: or to an averted eye speaking modest love and faithful pride. Atheling felt the distance, for a delicate soul is touched only by delicate praise. Notwithstanding, was he grateful for the rough approbation of his deeds; and, resisting with diffidence the kind clamour, courteously bowed to his people; and questioned those near him upon their well being, their family, their prospects? occasionally he praised a dutiful child, a generous neighbour, an industrious

trious housewife; or, he stopped before a threshold to admire the well pruned fig-tree, or vine clinging upward, or the neat simplicity of the interior of a dwelling. Then arose strong emulation, and hopes went round in loud whispers of like excellence and like praise. Every art of the husbandman was exalted, and prizes were offered weekly for the noblest tillage, and best fruits of the earth.

And now the Prince revolving every change, ascended to the citadel in which the fallen minister passed his weary captivity. Here, liberty was all the want he knew; for his daily supply exceeded every wish of nature. The Prince demanded the keys and stood before him:—

"Minister of the late governor of Paphos," said he with the dignity of reserve; "I at length stand before you, but think not that I have been unmindful of you; or, that I have deferred till now, without a cause, your condemnation, or release. No, Sir, an Englishman holds liberty too sacred to lightly withhold it from a fellow mortal. His truth is dearer to him than life, and to this

this sacred pledge you now, perhaps owe your very existence. My soul disdains to accuse or argue, where I despise. I have promised you justice and protection; by the first, prepare to abide. My promise in the second matter, will only avail in securing you from the strong indignation of an injured people; a people who have a thousand times demanded your blood, and who have scarcely suffered, from even me, the slight excuses of delay. I have waited, cautiously waited, and have gently led their minds from the point, till I should hold some influence in their bosoms; for such I now dare hope; and be it mighty or insignificant, I will make the exertion in your behalf. But remember; I give you no hope. Prepare for your condemnation or acquittal, and endeavour to make up your accounts; for ere to-morrow's sun go down, 'tis more than likely you are no more."

The long haggard visage of the prisoner shrank more ghastly at these words of the magnanimous prince: he essayed in vain to rise from his seat, but his trembling knee

knee refused to support the towering yet shrivelled frame. The penurious jaw dropped downward; the deep seated twinkling eye seemed, for once, fixed in steadiness; and the long fibred throat gulped in convulsive dread its fear and dismay; whilst the boned and withered hands turning suddenly purple from the nail upward, were expanded and smitten together, as in the last apprehensions of nature.

Atheling was retreating: he unclosed the door, and gave one glance—his tender breast was instantly touched with pity, he stopped, "have you then parents?" asked Edgar, seeing his speechless horror. The prisoner endeavoured to utter "no;" but he failed, and shook his dishonoured head, "God be thanked!" exclaimed Edgar. "Would you see a friend?"—"I have none," replied the man, in a hollow murmur. "Alas! then art thou indeed to be pitied," said the Prince. "Can I send thee aught; what wouldst thou?"—"Send me the treasure," exclaimed the miser with a distorted smile; "give me but half—give me back my gold." Atheling started

—he

—he gazed—lost in painful wonder. At length as he descended from the tower, he muttered, "is it really so? Can such be really men? and men too, gifted with breath from the Omnipotent, with reason, sense, faculty, and frame of such exquisite parts even under the homeliest ensample? Amazing! what perversion of blessings, what ingratitude, and what depravity! Yet doubtless such hardihood of guilt has been the work of years. Is not every thing small, nay trifling in its beginning, and does it not increase but with time? How small then may be the very first step into wickedness? Do not I myself know and feel how easy, how trifling, how insignificant is the border of vice; how smooth the very first path into impropriety; how gradual the first descent from right and wrong, and how rapidly we are hurried forward as soon as the line is passed. O that the guilt of another may but serve to shew me mine own imperfection, and the weakness of all human nature, without the assistance of divinity!"

The Prince, intent upon the business of justice,

justice, commanded preparation to be made for the appearance of the minister. A strong balustrade was elevated round the chair of state, with a small nook firmly partitioned off in its centre. Across was fixed a large table, round which were benches; to the right a double row; and under the canopy a small desk with a supply of parchment and reeds.* Report soon buzzed the preparation and the cause; and multitudes flocked to observe; whilst a furious joy flashed in every eye as the concourse rushed back to the city to declare, that the instruments of torture and death were preparing for the detested prisoner.

The morning scarce beamed, when the palace gates were flung open, and the hall in a few moments was filled. Every one gazed in revengeful wonder, upon the extraordinary arrangements. One hoped to see the first stroke of the executioner; another held up the kerchief to sponge the first gush of blood; a third boasted of the tauntings with which he would assail the ear

* Used in the east as pens.

ear of the dying man. Thus all discoursed and horribly suggested during several hours, till the flush of curiosity was in a manner damped, and the clamour of novelty abated.

Atheling had waited the moment, and now seized it. The trumpet was heard in long drawn strains. Presently twelve men of the city advanced two and two, and ranged themselves upon the benches to the right; then came the six councillors of the Prince, clothed in their robes; next advanced the culprit with tottering step, supported by two officers; and close to him the Prince himself, superbly attired in long scarlet robes edged with costly fur; whilst upon his breast glittered the magnificent Venetian chain of diamonds, and from his uncovered head fell in immense and luxuriant beauty his dark and ambient curls, which were thrown back from a visage, on which sat, enthroned, grandeur of soul, virtue, purity, and angelic sweetness.

The Prince, looking round upon the amazed concourse with complacency and mild gravity, placed his hand on his breast and

and bowed. As he advanced to the canopy, he ungirt the splendid sword from his side, and raising it to command silence, slowly spoke:—

"Paphians! subjects of the great King of Cyprus; men committed to my trust; my children—brothers—friends!—Attend; and if your kind breasts owe me one generous feeling, interrupt me not, till I have ceased."—"We swear," burst from the astonished crowd. "Hold!" cried Edgar, "'tis enough."

"Paphians, you here see at this tribunal one who is charged with high misdeeds. I say, charged, for as yet, who shall confidently declare that he is guilty? I see, Paphians, I guess your thoughts—but attend.

"Two of you shall be walking near together; an assassin shall come suddenly forth, and kill one, notwithstanding his resistance and the aid of the other of you. The murderer shall flee away; and the defender besmeared with the blood of the dead, shall remain by the corpse. Persons shall arrive and hasten to seize the single man, supposing him to be the murderer; in vain he

he pleads; in vain he asserts his innocence; his word is diregarded and he is thrown into bondage. So far justice permits; for a man shall be no testimony for, or against himself. But what then? Shall the man be executed without an inquiry? Shall particular persons not be obliged by a solemn oath to speak truly, to answer to every question which may serve to throw any light upon the important matter? Shall it not be asked, whether these two men, the one who is murdered, and he who stood by his side as he lay dead—whether they had an enmity to each other? whether the deceased possessed money, or aught that the other wanted? Whether the living attempted to flee away? or, whether he boldly advanced, and in the confidence of integrity demanded his trial? Whether, in fine, with a mass of other enquiry, whether the wounds given, were apparently with any instrument thought to be, or actually in the possession of the prisoner? All these, and more shall be answered, ere the life of a man shall be stripped from him. This inquiry, this investigation, this patient ear to minute detail;

tail; this, my friends, is the true course of justice, that noble emanation from divinity, which man is authorised to hold with his fellow man. The sword is hasty and executes; but the word of justice is weighed in the balance ere it passes the lip. Retire then, my sword; thou art glorious for the field—he who presides in the court of justice, requires no other aid than conscience, and his sense of right and wrong."

As the Prince spoke, he sheathed the bright blade; and with inimitable grace hung it high over the canopy, and then continued:

"Paphians; this man before you is a prisoner. You shall now see an examination, begun according to the preparations. You would not, if you are generous, wish to see him die unjustly; if he is guilty, you would not desire that he should escape some chastisement. Listen then; with patience, listen; and you shall be relieved of every doubt, inasmuch as mortals dare determine. One single charge,—and surely we may be satisfied with this one, if it be the offence itself?—one single charge shall be

be laid to the prisoner. He shall stand in your presence to hear what may be said; this, my friends, we cannot refuse to any criminal; to hear fully the accusation brought against him. Two of these wise men shall, in presence of you all, ask any question connected with this charge of any one who has, of his own knowledge, aught to witness against him. When they shall have ceased to examine the accusers, the man shall surely be allowed an answer, or a word to extenuate his fault. Yes; he shall speak, and we will hear him; and if he tremble in the attempt, in so awful an assembly, I, myself, will depute, as being the head, and being desirous to give him the privilege of mercy,—I will depute another wise man to speak for him, and to say whatever may be said in his defence. Then shall you have heard all for, and all against the prisoner; I will, whilst you balance between the accusation and the defence, recapitulate to you the whole subject.

"What will remain to be done, oh Paphians! to pronounce the word "guilty,"

or the words "not guilty,"—but who shall do this?

"I?—no, my voice is the voice of only one man; besides, in my own person, of judge, I warn you, I shall lean to mercy. Should you make the awful decision? Paphians, 'tis your cause; ye represent the injured—'tis ye that prosecute.—On whom then, shall rest this vast responsibility? Behold those twelve dispassionate men. Their rank in life raises them from the temptations of poverty; their rank shuts them from the lure of riches. They are in happy mediocrity; neither enervated by luxury nor hardened by want. These are the men, calm, temperate, disinterested;—these are the men that shall listen to the whole course of justice; that shall weigh well both sides fairly, impartially, justly, unanimously. They shall decide—they shall speak—and in the front of heaven, and the face of men, will we abide by their determination."

Atheling in the earnestness of the speaker, dropped the solemnity of the judge. His eye sparkled in a blaze of animation;

mation; his hand in the vehemence of declamation was strained high upward as his lip made the sacred appeal to heaven; his cheek warmed by the flush of the noblest feelings, glowed to embrowned carnation; the ruby mouth was severed by the ardour of exertion, not in the levity of a smile;—and his stature expanded to fuller majesty, and lifted in huge folds the ample robe to partial negligence, as it clung about the fine-turned limb.

He ceased. The people astonished, awed by his truth, his majesty, and his lofty words, gazed upon him for a moment in silence—but presently a hollow murmur arose, it advanced, it spread, it burst into acclamation. "We are content! We will abide by thy tribunal. Be it life or death to the prisoner, we will rest satisfied!" cried a thousand voices. The Prince bowed, and pressed his hand on his breast. He bent down to his seat; and in semblance of arranging his robe, brushed off a swelling drop that filled round his bright eye; another drop gushed to the lid as he clasped his hands together, looked up for

an instant towards heaven, and sighed, "oh, my country! land of liberty, of justice, of mercy, of virtue! who can understand thy renown and not be moved, who can hear thy beautiful law expounded, and not be transported?"

Atheling waited till silence was restored, and then with solemn aspect, addressed the trembling culprit. "Sir: you are charged with the crime of embezzling, or putting aside for your own private use, the public money; for this crime, you shall now be tried before this solemn tribunal, in the face of heaven and your country. Look you then to all that is preferred against you, that you may have the opportunity of making some reply, in defence, or mitigation of your conduct. There are utensils; there is parchment; you are permitted to write that which you would recollect. Let the witnesses advance."

Now the Prince proceeded to note down every question and reply as the counsellor, who had been instructed by him, put and received it. The principal accusers were the chief of the household, the slaves of the

the palace, with the persons who assisted in clearing the sepulchre of its treasures. During eight hours, the Prince with admirable patience and zeal, directed this important solemnity; he leaned upon every favourable point with hope; and he listened with profound attention to every minute circumstance of the defence, which was deputed to the counsellor by the culprit. At length, this part of the inquiry was closed, and as the multitude stood in breathless suspense, Atheling turning with sweet dignity to the twelve men on his right hand, spoke thus:

"Gentlemen: you have been assembled this day, for one of the most solemn of human purposes—to determine upon the guilt, or the innocence of a fellow-creature. That you might not bear the prejudice of rank, or the envy of poverty, you are chosen from among the happy few of middling station; that you may have full assistance in forming a judgment, every minute circumstance relating to the crime with which the prisoner is charged, or upon which he rests his defence, is laid

open before you; that in declaring your opinion as to his guilt, or his innocence, there may not be a shadow of doubt; you are required to be unanimous in your declaration. Thus the coincidence of twelve men shall be a strong proof of the justice of the sentence; and upon it shall none dare to raise a murmur.

" The question you have to consider, is, whether the man did, or did not secrete the public money. Various evidence has been brought forward unfavourable to his general character; if you think these sufficient, you will decide upon his actual guilt; but if you conceive it likely that the vases of coin, which could scarcely be lifted by two strong soldiers, might have been transported to the sepulchre by other hands, at the governor's command, long before he expired; — if you conceive it improbable that such a collection could have been made unauthorized by his superior; —if you see any reason to suppose, that as being the minister to a rapacious man he might dread the indignation of a suffering people, and endeavour without any

any other intent, to seek a strong place of shelter, then must you determine upon his innocence."

Atheling paused. With tranquil aspect he leaned backward, to shew that his part was finished; he looked round upon the gasping multitudes, who gazed with profound admiration and wonder on him, on the twelve, and then on the prisoner, who had swooned with terror as the decisive moment drew nigh, and was supported by two attendants. Atheling looked serene; but his breast throbbed in strong beats against his robe; and the whole exertion of his magnanimous soul was scarcely sufficient to crush every rising emotion, as he now and then observed the flutter cease, and preparation made for speech from the right bench.

At length, the eldest of the twelve men leaned forward; looked full upon Edgar, and said in a loud, firm voice, "we find the prisoner not guilty, my lord."

The Prince in a moment hastened to take advantage of the silence; and immediately addressed, in a distinct, impressive

tone, the trembling minister, who had fallen in extacy upon his knee. "Sir," said he, "the word is passed. Your countrymen have declared you innocent of the crime with which you were charged. Our sacred faith is pledged to stand by the decision, and liberty is restored you. But remember, sir, that circumstances are revealed through the course of this inquiry, that reflect dishonour, I might add shame, upon your general character. You will now do well, sir, in seeking a banishment, and in hiding your reproach in a corner where you may be unknown and unmolested; and learn, that a really virtuous man rises from a public trial ennobled in public estimation; but that a vicious one, however he may be judged as to the principal charge, is in danger from the evidence to his misconduct, of losing even the small interest that pity has excited for him. You are free. See that you endeavour to employ better the remaining few days that are spared you. Hasten to the fortress you have quitted; put up a change of raiment, and know that in fewer than three

three days, we shall expect intelligence of your departure."

Shouts now rent the high-storied roof. The people enraptured by the words, shouted, "Long live the governor, long live the Prince, who governs us by justice." Atheling rose and bowed to the vast concourse, and gently commanding two attendants to lead away the fallen minister through a private circuit, himself waited—again bowed, and desiring a tribe of slaves to bring into the hall, food for the half-famished throng, himself retired, beaming in grateful feeling at being spared the dreadful execution of a man, and joyful in having finished the arduous task of this day. He then partook of a slight repast, and watched the hour of midnight for the fulfilment of the last self-imposed and noblest duty.

Now the crowd dispersed to their homes, all the way chaunting his loud praises. At length every murmur ceased. The household prepared for rest. Atheling raised his taper; all was still. He gazed upon the heavens, bright in stars and beautiful, as if pleased,

and participating in the sweetest feelings of man. He once more ascended the room in which the minister reclined, now unguarded; and he moved the taper towards the couch—it flashed on the sallow countenance—the man started and awoke.—"Mercy!" said he, on beholding Atheling, "oh mercy!"—"Unworthy old man!" cried the Prince, disdainfully, "what canst thou fear from me? did base designs enter my breast, I could take fuller vengeance than thou dreamest of; but hearken. If life be in thine eye worth such preservation, descend instantly; choose, without delay, from amongst the fleetest of my steeds; escape with precipitation—the voice of one man is weak among that of thousands, and there is no law to ensure thee protection; thy trial was only permitted, not enforced. Hasten then to the most distant port—embark, and land on some shore where thou mayst be unknown. There live thy little span, and humble thyself for all thy past misdeeds; hasten, for the night is already far advanced. To relieve

lieve thy wants, here is a purse. Reform, be honest, and dread to provoke a further indignation!"

The minister stretched forth his hand, received the gold, pressed it to his heart, and looked up to the Prince—thrice he bowed; thrice he endeavoured to speak. A long convulsed sigh burst from his haggard breast. "Oh, wondrous virtue! What is he? Such youth; such awe!" he murmured. "Dost thou remember, my lord," asked he, with a ghastly smile, "that I sought thy life, even when thou gavest me mine? and now, and.....oh for relief to this labouring breast!" and he wrung his hand and struck it on his brow. "Hasten, Sir," cried the Prince, "seek the path of rectitude, and my good wishes attend you." So saying, he led the way, and the minister striking his forehead, exclaimed, "Oh, wonderful, wonderful!" Atheling descended. The man trembling, pale, confounded, tottered after him, bending low, and repeating as he passed on, "Oh most wonderful!" The Prince led forth a powerful steed, and assisted him to mount.

The man clasped his hands, looked for a moment upon a pale beam of light that broke round the infant moon, and cried, "'Tis too much—who shall reward him?" and then suffering the reins to be put in his torpid hand, as his head drooped, Edgar quickly led the horse forward to a little distance, till he perceived the fresh air had restored the fugitive. Then he turned about, waved his hand, and in a few moments entered the palace doors, closed them, sought his chamber, and fell into placid rest.

The following morning it was discovered that the minister had accepted his voluntary exile. The news was so grateful to the people, that they cared not to make any enquiry; and Edgar dismissed for ever the ungracious event from his mind, and employed himself daily more to the welfare of his people. The city increased in strength, beauty, and riches; the country round about wore every luxuriance of cultivation, and the people, from being mournful and slothful from fear or despair, were now gay, happy, emulative, and incited to exertion

ertion from the public reward and approbation of their deeds.

Months rolled away ; the glory of Atheling increased, and could the applause of his people give perfect happiness, then had he possessed it ; but other hopes fluttered in his breast. Like the prattling babe, whose eager eye is caught during a few moments by the caress, on the glitter of a stranger, but who almost instantly turns round its little anxious gaze for the nurse, and mourns if it see her not ;—thus Atheling amused, occupied, labouring in his duties of the day, had not the leisure to give his bosom vent ; but, in the evenings, when relaxation gave him liberty of thought, he sought the solitary beach or the grave, or perched upon a high cliff that overlooked the bay ; directed his tearful eye across the western shores, and sighed for his native home. " Brilliant sky of the eastern world, thou voluptuous breeze, thou tender vapour, thou soft peach-blossom tint of floating bloom, what are ye to me ?" cried the Prince, " I would change ye all for one varying day in my native clime ! Oh, soft luxuriance,

luxuriance, soft effeminacy of all-tender nature, thou wouldst fain unman me; thou wouldst enervate the strong purpose of my soul. I feel of what thou art capable; but shall the firm sinews of my frame, which were knit so strong in the majesty of England's natives; shall these be slackened, be rendered slothful and powerless by a soft air? Oh never! And how shall I toil over the rugged path, when I am permitted to trace it, that leads from this point to my paternal roof, if I preserve not my limbs vigorous and hardy for every difficulty and rough chance of a soldier's lot? Alas! 'tis not the dangers that intimidate; but having combatted and conquered them, 'tis the disappointment which I dread. My father—my loved mother—my friends—my Prince—my de Clifford—my country!—No intercourse, no intercharge of sentiment!—Oh that the half of my days could purchase one little sentence:—'All thou lovest are well.' Joyfully, most joyfully would I bid them rush from my allotted number, and command death to mark me down for an earlier day!"

Such

Such were the meditations of Atheling in his hours of recreation, when the sun buried himself in the glowing wave, and nature paused, listening to night's deep tread;—then the Prince returned to the palace, and fearful of self-indulgence, permitted himself only a frugal meal. Afterwards, he studied the few dusty parchment volumes left by the crusaders in the palace library; and, two hours before midnight, stretched himself upon his homely bed. Temperance and health closed his eye-lid, whilst peaceful conscience gilded every dream.

Meantime, while Atheling rested secure in the fulfilment of duty, the court of Cyprus mistrustful, secretly marked all his proceedings; and spies, who were mingled among his slaves, gave daily advice of his conduct. Edgar, ever unsuspecting and frank, gave to all free access; and thoughtless of consequences, wore the open air of a man who means well, and acts upon the noble principles of integrity. With scrupulous fidelity he had himself arranged and balanced every ac-

coun

count of his government, and transmitted one monthly to his court. Generous praise was returned to his first acts; Atheling felt the glow, and with new ardour, strove to be worthy of the confidence of the court that employed him. On a sudden, the Cypriot Prince forgot to write, and deputed his secretary, and at length, this communication also ceased, and during six months, the signature of de Lusignan, to formal state papers, was the only mark by which Atheling could judge of his existence. The son of Mercia, ever inclined to excuse, from time to time, continued to address the Cypriot Prince as his friend; but at length, his high soul caught the affront, and he too disdained all intercourse. Deeply stung, and keen upon his honour, Atheling said, as his bright eye flashed indignation, "Yet even this provocation shall not urge me from my post; I might resign it and depart, but who shall vindicate mine honour to the King of Cyprus, who is every day expected? No; a breath shall not dim Atheling's honour in his absence. My term of exile is not yet ended, but should

should it expire to-night, yet would I not stir till the King himself arrive, and do me justice. Sooner would I be enchained to yon rock, and feel the rushing waves beat about my wasted frame—sooner be engulphed for existence in the palace dungeons, or wind my sinewy arms round yon date, and grow to its bark, than stir but a single step from this little isle, and leave mine honour to the breath of calumny, or the whisper of doubt." Such were the thoughts of Atheling, but he locked them in his own breast, for he had no friend with whom to uncharge his griefs, no adviser, not even the old councillor, for he had, long since, taken umbrage at the noble Viceroy, and feigned illness, that he might keep his chamber, and hide his disgust; but he watched every action of Edgar, and secretly employed messengers to convey his treacherous papers. Atheling, whose tender bosom was warm to every sufferer, sent him daily the finest fruits he could gather, with his own hand, with also the sweetest food. Day by day he dispatched a kind inquiry, and the proposal of a friendly

friendly conference; but this was ever declined. The Prince respected the peevishness and infirmity of age, and forbore to molest him.

Now the time of banishment drew near its conclusion, and Edgar, pensive, meditated upon the return of the King. He paced his regular rounds on the beach, unmindful of the changed aspect of nature. A group of beautiful maidens of Paphos, hastily drew in the linen they had steeped in the wave, and piling it in orange-wood baskets, raised them on their flowing tresses, whilst the artful veil but half concealed the bright glaring eye,[112] the audacious rosy lip, that were interested in the manly grace, yet awed by the virtuous temperance of the young noble of England. The Prince, accustomed to the soft blandishment of the susceptible natives, steeled his breast to every look that admired, every word that caressed; he passed in the midst of models for antiquity, and passed unmoved: so now he heeded not the actions of the young Paphians; but the sky lowered, the sea-bird dropped his wing, screamed and fled; the

the wave stood sluggish, as if in suspense, and the fisherman hastily cut the waves, and dashed forward to the port for shelter; suddenly evening broke forward, as if to hasten the catastrophe; and now the huge winds burst, and rushing from under the bed of waters, heaved up the billows in their circumference, and panting for a moment, sank in the centre, and formed themselves into numberless horrible chasms.

Atheling now started, and strode towards the palace; he essayed with one hand to fix the towering helmet on his proud head, and he struggled to grasp the military cloak round his majestic frame. Soon he gained the heights, and touched the marble steps, and there he loitered, listening,—for a sudden thought broke through his mind—he sadly smiled. "On such a dreadful night as this may be, I rushed across the country on the faithful beast of my de Clifford, to catch one look, one last look, at my beloved home. I risked mine honour to embrace parents, who thought my life without honour, worthless. I rushed from them whilst their displeasure

rang

rang on mine ear; all was safe, and I was again their son. Oh, my father, how fresh is this event in my recollection! and can even more than six long years have passed me by, since that portentous storm! Surely they are as a dream—how fleet—how short—as time; and yet how long, when reckoned as distance from the last embrace of those we love."

A sudden shock opened heaven, and a red blazing stream of lightning darted forward in a crooked direction to the earth, and curling round the root of a bush, inflamed, shrivelled, and scorched it to embers. Edgar beheld with awe, but without dismay; he stood unmoved, whilst a crash of thunder roared across the firmament, was smothered in the hurricane, broke loose, died away, and burst afar in broken sullen peals till it expired. "How dreadful, how wonderful is the power of nature, but how much more vast and wondrous is He that commandeth nature! The flame that scorched yon bush, may curl 'round my limb, drink up my flood of life, and leave me a heap of ashes! But what? Shall I flee

flee and hide me in the deepest vault of man's art? Poor refuge! If Omnipotence command, what will avail the deepest chasm of the thick earth? The stream shall strike, and insinuating downward, leave vegetation fast slumbering in its seeds, to wither. Then how shall man resist the arm that letteth loose the bolt of thunder, biddeth it take aim against him? Vain, vain endeavour! No; I love thee, I love to contemplate thy majesty, when in arms, O Nature! Howl, ye winds; swell and dash the foaming spray, ye waves; brush across the firmament, ye big dark clouds; break from them, ye fiery streams, and pointing headlong downward, hide your fiery train in the hissing billow, and drag after, in your passage, the reverberating thunder! I fear ye not—not a hair of my head shall ye dare to injure, if the Eternal forbid; not a bone of my frame but shall crumble to dust, should the Almighty threaten!"

The Prince continued to walk the portico, resting from time to time, to mark the grandeur of the swelling tempest. "Nature

ture is ever the same; how like," said he, "is this storm to those I have gazed on from Restormal! Man is ever changeable, and he only of creation is not fixed to one great and everlasting law. Of all study, surely that of himself is the most intricate and perplexing. How has my soul been confounded in the variance between the simple notions of childhood and books, and the rugged reality of experience! How altered in these six years are my views of man, my idea of things, my notions of myself, my benevolence to all! I considered every glory as centered in war; now I behold the dreadful effects of war, and find the happiness of mankind to consist in peace. My veneration for age was nearly worship; I considered a wrinkled brow as the supreme mark of honour! and a silver-haired crown as a diadem of virtue. Now, alas! I discover in the unhappy Leolf and the fallen minister, that age may have crimes, and silver hairs be foolish. I fancied that a man who gave himself the noble title of friend, was in heart and soul ready to expire for me. But de Lusignan, thou hast

has taught me that a man may call another *friend*, and yet slight him. If I ventured to lift mine eye to a woman, I thought her smile that of an angel, and in purity not less, and now I dare even guess that a woman may tarnish her fame, and yet not expire with confusion and remorse! Oh, unkind experience! unwelcome knowledge! Cannot we then say with nature, the lion is strong; woman is virtuous; age is wise, and the fox is subtle! Alas! knowledge then, but teaches man to disesteem himself; for in more he sees, the less is he attached to life: and so it should be; for we are to quit this earthly spot, and 'tis just that the ties of man be weakened ere they be snapped, and he view his native land no more."

As Edgar thus mused, he fixed his eye upon a distance, and steadily he gazed; for he perceived a long glare of light. At first he thought it a flash of the fiery streams; but it grew stronger, it spread rapidly upward, it widened, it seemed to draw nearer to the shore; and now a volume of smoke flew away in the gust, and a large

a large vessel appeared for an instant, and then was lost in dark clouds. "Powers of heaven!" cried Atheling, "a ship and in flames!—the hurricane!—oh most dreadful! every soul will be lost in the main. He rushed into the palace stables; threw off his mantle; seized a steed and sprang on his back. "Follow me to the beach," said he, to the slaves whom he met; "kindle lights upon the hills," and he darted forward, scoured down the heights, and in a few minutes stood at the port. Several men were there, busily lashing their little barks with double cabling. "Give me a boat," cried he, "any reward shall be yours, my friends, behold yonder vessel in flames, the people will all perish. Who will attend me to save a fellow man?—haste!—quick! or all are lost!" "Sir," answered the first, trembling, "the night is dreadful; we dare not," and they drew back. "Cowards!" retorted the Prince, "is my life of less value than yours? Dastardly race! oh ye are, indeed, unlike to Britons. Away then; give me the boat, I will assist them, or I will die in the attempt." So saying, he snatched

snatched the lantern from a hand, flung himself into a boat, tore off his armour and his helmet, and hanging high the lamp well defended by the transparent horn from the winds as a signal to the despairing mariners, seized an oar in either hand, and with all the energy of his courageous soul, and the perseverance of his nature, with daring and rapid strokes cut the foaming wave.

And now, as if nature had smiled in pity in the magnanimity of her proudest work, and had been eager to relent, there suddenly fell in tremendous drops the pelting rain, that in a moment drenched the exposed ringlets and half-bared shoulders of the Prince. "Welcome, kind drops! extinguish the scorching terrors of the poor hearts that vessel contains," cried Edgar; "pour on, grateful floods, and let them be saved," continued he, as he raised up an eye to the ship that he began to distinguish.

And now the winds' fury abated, three times had Atheling been half engulphed, and three times his little bark pointed

her keel upward and recovered her balance. Edgar held firm and undaunted, he feared not the storm—he dreaded not death. "The wave," said he aloud, "shall in vain curl around and endeavour to sweep me away, if my God protects me; if I must now sleep in eternity, 'tis his will, and I submit." The confidence gave fresh ardour; and Atheling perceived with joy, that he was now within hearing of the vessel—he shouted. The cheer was re-echoed back. How sweetly did the sounds fall upon the ear of the Prince—his courage grew yet more vigorous—he brushed off from his brow the immense drops of heat that in an instant rose up again, and fell on his open breast; he pushed back his dripping curls, struck the smoking oar with redoubled force; and now he was near to the ship which still reflected a vast heat; but the violence of the flames was lost in the kindly moisture. Several hands were busied with dreadful eagerness in pouring great casks of water over the deck to break the communication from the rigging, and the mast, half burned, was sawn across and thrown

thrown into the sea. The Prince called to the persons who stood by, and in various broken language endeavoured to make himself understood. An Italian answered, "generous stranger, we have on board two noble travellers, take them in charge; by the mercy of heaven we shall conquer the flames and we may be saved."—"Do not, Sir, run so dreadful a risk," replied Atheling, "what number have you on board?"—"Oh, Sir, we have nearly fifty persons, and the boat we have is too small to accommodate them. We wished to save our noble strangers, but they declare they will perish with us."—"Generous souls," replied Edgar, "but here is room for half the company;"—"Can your vessel hold twenty?"—"It can."—"Enough then; for see the flames rush fiercer from yon side." The captain looked round and instantly gave his commands; his boat was lowered—he flung himself below, roused some from despair, some from pious meditation. Amazement and varied joy seized on all. Numbers gathered on the deck; and whilst the labouring vessel heaved and

buffeted with the dashing spray, every one grappled huge ropes and prepared with tottering step to slide downward. But there appeared amongst them, enveloped in dark wrappers, two figures; one of majestic stature, the other less, the first supported the second who lagged after him with a feeble step.

Atheling unsolicitous to question, desired in Italian accents, other hands to steady the little bark; whilst with a strong grasp he held cables to support the distinguished persons, the weaker he received in his strong arm, and respectfully placed on the bench; he stretched forth his hand to the other, who with big strides and undaunted action, soon swung from the ship's side, and grasping the hand of Atheling, in silence put it to his breast. Atheling returned the grasp; and instantly led him to the side of the other noble; then receiving the remaining persons of his share, left the captain who was also embarked with his little company in the small skiff to follow.

The Prince beaming in joy and gratitude to heaven, and anxious to check the tumult of

of grateful thanks, that echoed from the Italian crew, now craved their silence and aid to steer back the vessel to the shore. Apprehension of danger urged the mariners, and several took an oar, whilst Edgar with all his strength dashed forward with deep and heavy strokes. The little bark low seated in the billows, rose up with effort, and sank with sudden and fearful motion. The foam splashed over, and deadly fear palsied every working hand, but that of Edgar. "Cheer up! courage, friends!" cried the hero, "we approach the island!—hark!—the wind subsides. Exert yourselves—be brave. Heaven is merciful—we shall be saved." These hopeful words buoyed up the fainting spirits. Again the oars played lustily. Again they advanced; but on a sudden the rains ceased. A vast blaze curled again up; the whole firmament was stained in deep vermilion. Flames rose dreadful from every part of the ship. The Prince gazed and shuddered for the remaining crew, but soon perceived it labouring on; and though afar, yet not in danger from the burning wreck. "All is well!" cried

he, aloud to the sailors, "and to heaven be the praise!" a few now laughed in delirious joy at the rescue; but again Atheling checked the transport, and entreating forbearance and patient toil, again pushed forward.

The bark at length entered the haven, and the swelling fury of the waves was checked. The lights kindled round by Atheling's command, now directed the sufferers; and Edgar, who well knew the track, led up quite to the steps of the ascent. In a few moments the seamen landed amidst the hundreds of Cypriots, collected on the rumour of the conflagration. Athelling advanced to raise the two strangers; but one was senseless, and the other in imperfect Italian, endeavoured to address the standers around. Atheling lifted and bore him in his arms; the second noble stranger followed and they stepped on shore.

Now every one crowded round the Prince for orders. His people and slaves, penetrated with respect and wonder, at the grandeur of his courage, stood submissive to his will. The one held his beautiful courser;

courser; another presented other steeds from the royal stables, for the guests. The Prince ordered a litter, to transport the sick stranger to the palace; but he had recovered, and moved a few steps towards him. Atheling then offered him a steed, and to the lesser stranger presented his own; but suddenly, every one astonished observed, that the governor's beautiful courser reared up; she pawed the ground, she foamed at the mouth, she struck out her foot to advance, and lashed her sides with her flowing hair. "'Tis most strange! what should this mean?" said Edgar to the slave. "I know not, my lord," replied he. "Let her," said Atheling, "have length of rein; what ails a steed, otherwise gentle as a lamb?" So saying, he held the rein slack, and in a moment the animal leaped forward, crouched down at the stranger's feet, neighed, looked up, and put her head submissive down to the ground—then knelt, and again snorted, kissing the mantle, and smelling with unbounded joy. The stranger put forth his hand. "Whence," said he, in tremulous

accents, and in the Cypriot language, "whence came this animal?"—"From the royal stables of Nicosia, Sir," quickly answered Atheling. "Philgah!" said the stranger; "is it really my faithful steed?" The creature, now more transported, at the sound of her name, put her head across the shoulder of her master, and closed her full eye upon his cheek. The stranger threw his arms over her swelling neck, and joined them; "what, my Philgah, thou still lovest thy master?" said he; "thy king is still dear to thee?" and he buried his royal visage in her mane, and wept.

Atheling started. The multitude fell back. "The King! the King of Cyprus!" echoed round. "And who," cried Edgar in his native language, "and who art thou? Oh speak not, I conjure thee, be silent, if thou art not English-born, oh second stranger!" and he turned with trembling haste to the other noble. Astonished at the voice, unlike to any he knew, yet familiar with the language, the stranger replied, "I am indeed of England, most generous Sir; my name, Beauchamp, of

of Warwick. And who art thou? I might judge my countryman, by thy voice." The Prince waited not for more; he made a spring, and flung himself into the arms of the great Earl of Warwick, and hanging on his manly breast, could only say, "I am Edgar Atheling."

Beauchamp, whose natural gaiety only smothered, but did not extinguish the tenderness of his great soul; Beauchamp, fearless of death, but whose late danger and deliverance had profoundly touched; Beauchamp, saved by his beloved charge, subdued by the noble action, and the recollection of his own family, forgot his firm resolve; he grasped close the son of his friend; he tried in vain to speak, not a word escaped. Again he strove—moisture started up, and gushed round his eye; he seized the hand of Atheling, wrung it, and turned away, for in its efforts was his proud soul convulsed.

This action chilled all the blood of Edgar's frame. Dark thoughts shot across his mind—his cheek, before flushed in joy and admiration, now flitted to a ghastly

paleness—his knee tottered, his hands were clasped together; he opened his lips to speak, they remained severed; his voice failed, and he stood motionless. The people near him observed with amazement, but immediately was Beauchamp himself; he approached with haste: "Atheling," said he, with earnestness, "art thou not well, what aileth thee?"—"My lord—do they live—and well?" said Edgar in a low murmur. "Who, the King of England? he is well, my Edgar; and the glorious Prince of Wales has now a wife and son."—"One word more," cried Edgar: "Restormal—my father?"—"He lives, and the Countess too. I left them well as usual two months since, and cheered by the hope of seeing thee return with me in a short time to thy native country; for they have heard of thy being detained in the east, and know that thy term of banishment is nearly expired. They heard all from the Dauphin of France, to whom they wrote concerning thee; for they have received but one of thy letters."—"Thanks, most kind Sir," answered Atheling, with transports

ports of joy. "Oh, most dear, most welcome news! did they give one little line to your care for me?"—"The Countess," replied Beauchamp, "sent thee a large packet—but 'tis there," added he, pointing to the wreck; "yet," said he, raising his tone to cheerfulness, and shaking the Prince heartily by the hand, "trouble not thyself concerning the writing; we shall soon, I guess, climb old Restormal ramparts, gaze on the waves round British land, and talk old times threadbare. So let us be thankful to heaven, and happy as Britons may be, away from their homes." Thus saying, the Earl of Warwick strode away to the King of Cyprus, who had been questioning the persons near him of his son, his daughter, and of the stranger to whom he was indebted for life. No sooner had he learned the name, than he recollected it; and meeting Atheling, who respectfully advanced and bowed, pressed him to his heart in the warmth of honest gratitude.

Now the party, amidst shouts and tumults of joy, took the road to the palace.

The King, mounted on his faithful steed, and weakened by exertion and late sickness, rode slowly on. The rain again fell; and he commanded the crowd to retire to their habitations for shelter. Accustomed to submission, they obeyed. Beauchamp, Atheling, and the remaining persons fell back, not to outstep the monarch; and Hugh de Lusignan arrived at the palace first, entered the gates, and stopped at the porch. No sooner had he rested, and prepared to alight, than a dozen guards rushed from the entrance, with sabres drawn, and seized the reins. "Yield thyself prisoner, Sir," said one. The King started—the company galloped close. "By whose authority?" cried the King. "By that of the Prince of Cyprus; yield, for thou art prisoner, and the new governor has orders to detain thee."—"And who is the new governor, I pray ye, Sirs?" asked Hugh. "Your late minister, my lord," said one. The King now stepped from his horse. Atheling, thunderstruck, leaped forward, and Warwick followed. "Lead on, and silence!" said he, as he observed the flashing

ing eye of the Prince, and his lip ready to undeceive the guards; "lead on, I say." The soldiers, awed by the command, raised the tapers, opened a passage, and the monarch, closing the folds of his mantle, and gently motioning to Atheling to keep aloof, entered a vast chamber, illumined but faintly. At the further end was a high canopy, and under it leaned, in disdainful listlessness, and clothed with magnificence, the old man who had so long feigned himself ill and decrepid. The King, hiding his visage, advanced in the chamber, and stood; then the new governor thus spoke:

"You behold him, late your vassal, now your lord and master, haughty foreigner. I have power over you, even to life and death; but the Prince of Cyprus will of needs see you; and 'tis well to be relieved of spilling blood, upon wearing young dignities, or else, traitor, thou shouldst die, for death is thy deserts. What mean those midnight walks of thine? what now hast thou been contriving, thus to rush out and hide thyself, when tempests roar over thy head? Who art thou, to defy the power of elements?

elements?—but no—'tis for a base purpose. The Prince is justly exasperated against thee, and to him I commit thy fate. Seize him, guards; and wait with him till the dark terrors of the night be passed, then to Nicosia, and so fare ye well."

The soldiers stepped in, and lifted up the arm to drag away the captive. But Edgar could restrain no longer, and he rushed to them: "touch him not," cried he with rage and indignation; "dare to raise a hand, and ye shall die! And thou, traitor, most unworthy man," exclaimed he, looking at the terrified councillor, "behold!" and he raised the lamp, "behold the sacred head thou hast insulted." Hugh threw off his mantle. "And thou, caitiff," said he, "dost thou know me?"—"The King! ye infernal powers! then 'tis all over," cried the secretary, with a horrible smile: "no pardon—enough—be it so." Then he rose, drew from his side the glittering poignard, and in a moment struck it through his breast, and fell. Atheling, shuddering with horror, in vain darted to check the impious hand—it had struck, and

the man expired. Edgar endeavoured to raise him, and drew forth the dagger, to staunch the blood; but life had flitted for ever, and the Prince, sick at heart, turned disgusted from the spectacle. "He has then done himself justice," said the King, with calmness; "soldiers, see that you depart by to-morrow's dawn, and report this news to my son. Bid him expect me and my friends." The guards prostrated themselves in obedience, and withdrew. "Let us quit this chamber, Prince," said Hugh, "and crave thy hospitality."—"Your highness," replied Edgar, "commands these realms, and we obey."—"Not so," answered the King, "we are visitors here, where thou art governor; at Nicosia thou shalt be guest, and ourself the host." Edgar therefore bowed, in silence; for he pondered in sadness over the late event. He led on to the principal chamber, from whence, after the repast, all retired to rest.

But Atheling in vain endeavoured to sleep. The surprising accidents of the evening agitated his bosom; whilst the Earl of Warwick,

Warwick, who shared his capacious chamber from choice, was, in a moment, buried in a profound slumber. Edgar listened to the long drawn respiration of the warrior; he raised the lamp that shed its little rays from a marble niche, and leaning near the simple couch of his father's friend, beheld him placid, calm, fearless. A smile relaxed the hardihood of the veteran's lip, and its dark honours above and below, were relieved by the white line of ivory that just rose from under. The bright sword which had been wielded in Crescy and Poictiers, lay under his head; and beside it, the trusty helmet which had repelled every blow. A large silken coverlid of eastern fabric was thrown aside, and the cloak that had sheltered him in the field, now curled in ponderous folds over the warlike frame of Beauchamp. "Sleep on, proud bulwark of England's glory, most noble Warwick," cried Atheling, contemplating him with respect and love. "long may my country boast of such as thou!—long may her nobles hold up to untitled heads, lofty examples of goodness,

of

of loyalty, of bravery, of honour; and long may they like as thou art, be affectionate at home, magnanimous abroad, faithful in the cabinet, invincible in the field."

The following day the King accompanied by Edgar, rode through the city, and saw with pride and joy the prosperity and happiness of his subjects. The Prince was too modest to mention the changes; but Hugh questioned, and the answers of all, confirmed his suspicions. The King soon fatigued returned to the palace; and Atheling immediately made preparation to draw out a formal resignation of his government to the court of Cyprus. All the expenses, the public disbursements, the revenues of his province, the treasures discovered,—all were arranged, balanced, and signed by the respective persons who were concerned in, or were privy to every transaction; and these state papers were sealed and held ready for delivery.

This important business finished, Edgar was most impatient for his departure, and ventured to press the Earl of Warwick.

"It

"It cannot be in the instant," replied Beauchamp, smiling; "the King will of needs shew us his court,—he will provide a vessel; and withal I have to visit Jerusalem, ere I return. Stay then here; it will be well, perhaps, that thou offend not the King, by a sudden resentment on his return. Of my engagement he is aware, 'tis with the Sultan of the East."

Edgar replied, "I respect in you, sir, my father, and I obey; yet—" and he sighed; "Yet," interrupted Beauchamp, "it seemeth hard; but time stands not still, Edgar; one month more, and we sail away for British land,—and then—but thou shalt first see the young Prince; the Black Prince has a son, named Edward, and his princess, the beautiful Maid of Kent, reigns in the heart of the grandest hero of the age—yes, Edgar, heaven permitting, we will surely touch at Bourdeaux, and see the dearest hopes of England." The blaze of animation that sparkled in Warwick's eye at the mention of this loved name, was instantaneously communicated to Edgar; he wrung delighted the hand of Beauchamp, and

and joined in the sweet, the glorious praise of the best of princes, and the most exalted of men.

The next morn the King was mended in health, and the company set forward towards Nicosia. They had not proceeded far, when a band of soldiers and officers of state drew near, with the Prince de Lusignan at their head. Hugh embraced his son, who knelt at his feet, and commanded him to rise and beg forgiveness of Atheling for his unworthy suspicion. Strong in his resentments, easily entangled by confidence or mistrust, Peter de Lusignan with the ease of a man who sins and is absolved in a breath, presented his hand with a slight apology to Edgar, who coldly bent as he received it; and Hugh immediately judging that all was again right between the Princes, embraced his son, and the party moved forward.

The Earl of Warwick and Atheling left the King at liberty to converse with the Cypriot prince, whilst they rode at some distance, behind. The sun threw his fiercest rays downward; and the heat increased

creased to oppression. Beauchamp lifted his helmet for a gasp of air, and then unclasped his wide cloak, which he folded, and hung across the steed's neck. Edgar fixed his gaze towards the Earl's left arm; through the joints of the coat of mail, was drawn in and out, and firmly tied in several knots, a discoloured brocade. It had been embroidered round the edges in gold, but the metal was broken and tarnished. Edgar drew nearer to the Earl, his eye still riveted to the little remnant. Beauchamp turned his head suddenly for a reply to a question twice asked, and still gained no hearing. Atheling looked up, and the deepest carnation spread over his cheek. "At what mayst thou be gazing so earnestly, Edgar?" said he, as he glanced upon his arm. "I was thinking, my lord," answered he, and he blushed deeper, "whether this brocade upon your sleeve, be not the scarf that—"—"Aye," interrupted Beauchamp, "my daughter, Julia, embroidered it nearly seven years since, and I preserve it for her sake. She is grown a sweet maid, Edgar; hast thou ever

ever seen her?" "Yes, my lord," replied Atheling, "I remember her a beautiful and lovely child, when she presented you with this same scarf." "What!" cried the Earl, whilst delight sparkled in his eye, "thou thinkest her a pretty maid?" "I thought the lady Julia most beautiful at the tender age of eight years—if she is now only to the half as lovely as promise taught us, she—" Atheling stopped—for the subject now confounded him.

But Beauchamp hastily spurred his steed; then checked it—then abruptly rejoining Atheling: "Edgar," said he, "my daughter will be near to sixteen, when thou returnest to England; I think thou hast a generous soul, and I will give thee my Julia for a wife, with a handsome portion. Thy father, I know, is a man of scruples; but I have heard him say, he should be glad that thou wouldst take a wife from among my daughters—some are already married, therefore, thou must make a choice amongst those that remain."

Vast and powerful emotion throbbed in Edgar's frame at these words; his fine countenance

countenance varied every moment in its expression. Now he cast his brilliant eye on the earth: now lifted it audacious upon the little scarf; now he smiled full in joy upon the Earl, and again his long lashes rapidly shaded the deep carnation of his embrowned cheek. The Earl smiled, yet he seemed to wait a reply. "If, my lord," at length, Atheling said, "if—your goodness—" and he paused. "If I am really in earnest, Edgar?" said Beauchamp; "to shew thee that I am, I will give thee this scarf as a pledge. Ask it of me to-night, thou shalt have it; but—" continued he, "though I am willing, my little daughter may not be; and I will not restrain her inclination for she is a dutiful child." "That is what I would have said," cried Atheling with ardour, "I should not enjoy happiness if I caused another to grieve." "I believe thee," exclaimed Beauchamp, "and 'tis in this belief that I offer thee my daughter; so ask me to-night for the scarf, and leave the rest to thy own good fortune and the lady's esteem for thee."

The

The Earl of Warwick having with his native impetuosity of soul, broached and ended his business, immediately fell upon other subjects, and wondered that his young friend replied so ill to his questions, and made observations so ill timed. "Atheling, art thou asleep?" said he. "My lord," answered the Prince, "Very." "Very what? I beseech you," inquired the Earl. "Very sultry; did not your lordship say 'twas sultry?" Beauchamp laughed outright. "Come," said he, "I will leave thee to thy meditations, and join the King awhile; I have matters to arrange with him," and galloped away. Atheling, half abashed, roused himself to converse with some of the gentlemen of the retinue; but his eye caught the fluttering scarf upon Warwick's arm, and his thoughts again dwelt upon the innocent and beautiful maid that was half his own. "Let me recall," said he, softly, "her action, when she presented the scarf to her father; her blooming cheek was dimpled in smiles; I recollect the swell of her graceful arm as she threw it over her jetty ringlets, and

her

her dark eye beamed underneath them upon mine. I recollect full well her gliding step as she approached me, and whispered that she would make me too a scarf. A few years cannot have robbed her of her sweet smile, the beautiful tenderness of her eye, her winning softness, her enchanting playfulness, her angelic innocence. Educated by such a mother; sprung from such a father as she has, the virtues of her mind must equal the graces of her person; and thou, thou my own father, thou too hast even sanctioned the gift! A whole month, Beauchamp! Oh England! when shall I again see thee? What obstacle now shall stand between thee and me? But what! if she be given to another, and that I see her but to deplore my loss?"

So mused Atheling, by turns, impatient, fretful, fired by hope; now anxious, doubting, fearing, and now smiling in the multiplied associations of chaste and beautiful tenderness. "Yes," cried he, "I am assured that I could adore a wife. Could I gaze upon her angelic smile and not smother the rising storm in my breast? Could

I see

I see this innocent being kneel to beg forgiveness of heaven for imaginary sins, and not fling myself upon the earth to supplicate mercy for my high misdeeds? Could I behold the touching softness of her swimming eye, and withhold my sympathy and protection? Could I see every mild and heavenly virtue beaming in her soft countenance, and glowing unboasted in all her actions, and not myself catch some of its influence? Never. What companion so dear, what society so tender, what example so strong, what power so great as hers! Intercourse sanctioned by every tie of honour, of law, of virtue, of religion. Oh, may such happiness be mine!"

Thus did wondrous love change in a moment the soul of Atheling. The powerful affections, the exquisite tenderness, the strong enthusiasm with which nature had so prodigally endowed him, had now, on a sudden, an object. Virtue was not alarmed, for this object was innocence itself. Duty was silenced, for a parent approved. Honour was satisfied, for the birthright of Julia was princely descent, good-

ness and beauty. The warm affections of Edgar, from floating around, in search of some kindred ember to nourish and form them into consistence, were instantaneously suspended and fixed to a centre, and a thousand little energies sprang from them and strung every motion. An arch audacity peeped from his eye; a ready smile sat on his lip; his step, when he leaped from the steed to walk by its side, was lighter and more rapid; his speech varied; now it was quick, now hesitating, now eloquent, but always cheerful, and even gay; and his allusions, though unknown to himself, had a perpetual reference to some happiness in prospect. A hundred little perversities of life, which before were tormenting to human nature, he now beheld with indifference — he beheld and was amazed; yet he sought not for the cause, rejoiced to feel life's current so strong, and its tenure so alluring. O hope! how beautiful are thy visions! what would become of mortality without the golden streak of thy promising finger!

The King of Cyprus and his train entered

tered Nicosia, and proceeded, amidst the acclamations of the people, to the royal residence. The Princess Berengaria was confined by indisposition, which obliged her father to visit her in her apartments. The King, who loved generous sports and magnificence, had it proclaimed, that he would hold tournaments, according to the fashion of England and France,[113] and that he would bestow prizes on the best contenders at all the games known or introduced to his court; but that he would give a month for preparation, and wait the Earl's return from Jerusalem and his daughter's recovery, who, with her ladies and those of the nobles, should grace the diversions with their presence. Upon the conditions of a speedy return only, could the King be prevailed on to allow of Warwick's departure. Then a vessel was ordered to be in immediate readiness for his conveyance.

Atheling saw his revered friend sail away with heavy regret, but he retained the promised, the precious scarf. Jealous of every eye but his own, he drew the little pledge

of parental confidence from his breast when he was retired for the night, or that he trod an unfrequented path; he then unfolded, gazed at, and held it in his hand, whilst pleasing images, soft delusions of fancy, amused and cheered the tedious hours of Warwick's absence. Once he looked even more eagerly than usual, when he perceived upon the border the remains of small letters; they had been wrought in hair, and were partly effaced, but Atheling distinctly read, "Heaven bless my f....," father was intended. A smile of tenderness distended Edgar's lip as he read the words. "And heaven bless thee too, innocent maid," cried he; and, as he looked upon the azure sky, he continued,—"How sweet are those affections, with which 'tis not a crime to mingle the sacred name of heaven! Did I think upon her with less delicacy, less respect, less veneration, then I durst not look up and beg of heaven to bless her, even as she craved a blessing on her beloved father."

But time, which marches with the same pace for the ardent and the indifferent, at length

length led Atheling through the revolution of a moon, and to some distance beyond; for the Sultan would not be denied, so delighted was he with the honour of Warwick's visit. He was at last persuaded, and having given to his English guest costly marks of friendship, embraced, and saw him depart with deep regret. Edgar sprang with transport into Beauchamp's arm, and the King, who really loved him, sincerely rejoiced in his return; and now all was bustle, preparation, joy, feasting, merriment and delight. The Princess was well; and, with her ladies, was stationed so as to witness every sight to the highest advantage.

Fired by glory and animated by love, Atheling entered the lists, and joined with ardour in every manly sport. Ever graceful, majestic, victorious, modest in triumphs, not an antagonist could refuse praise to his generosity. Not a soldier but spoke to his undaunted courage, and wondrous dexterity in arms; not a courtier but was forced to allow him graceful address with the ladies; not a man but marvelled

that such strength of limb should be found united with such supple movement; such grandeur of countenance with such modesty of demeanour; such proud height of stature with such gentleness of speech. In a word,—that a prince endowed with as much virtue as grace, should seem so little to feel his own worth. Poor Cypriots! they knew not that England's sons so much resembled Edgar in virtue, in grace, in majesty, that the hero but felt himself as equal to others of his beloved country—country, most dear, most beautiful; fruitful in every being, good and great; laud pre-eminent in wisdom and in honour!—In his love for thee, every native forgets all other interests — beauteous inspirer! wrap an image of thyself in all my wishes, my hopes, my joys; let thy praise be my sweetest theme, thy glory my proudest joy, and thy benefit the powerful motive to all my imperfect attempts!

The day, the glorious day that was fixed on for the departure of Atheling to his native shores, now arrived. His turbulent joy was scarcely to be concealed; yet from respect

respect to the King who was downcast and silent, he endeavoured to stifle it; but his sparkling eye told a tale of eloquence. He kissed the extended hand of the Princess, who peevishly drew it away as she caught the lurking vivacity, which he vainly endeavoured to smother. Peter de Lusignan, vexed to the heart with envy, had waved all intimacy; he bowed, and offered his compliments; Edgar returned them with equal indifference; his heart was too elated to be hurt by trifles, but Hugh embraced Warwick and the Prince, and hung on the breast of each a cross of splendid jewels, and a ring of the same on both hands. Edgar affected by the grief and goodness of the monarch, knelt respectfully before him, and taking his hand, poured forth from his warm heart, every noble sentiment of gratitude and regard. The King raised and embraced him, again pressed the hand of Warwick, and left the apartment. The Britons, much affected, then mounted the car, and were swiftly conveyed to the port; there they embarked, the wind blew fair, the anchor

was raised, and the island of Cyprus was soon but as a speck in the vast ocean.

Edgar could scarcely credit his felicity. "Oh, may I never grow proud in prosperity!" cried he, "yet my heart beats already high; already, methinks, I could forget all my adversity; let me gaze upon yon coast, still visible, and call over all the trials of my government in Paphos, all my endurance in other climes, and then surely these unruly transports will pass away." So reasoned Atheling; and as he had been taught that entire idleness is the most inveterate foe to virtue, he constantly sought employment. Books there were none he could understand, for the vessel was bound for the Tagus, laden with eastern merchandize, and the company of it were chiefly Lusitanians, and the commander himself was an unlettered man and not fond of society. The Prince sometimes paced the deck with Beauchamp, and seized moments to inquire concerning relations, his country, and the long-lost de Clifford; but Beauchamp was soon fatigued with talk,

talk, and Edgar instantly desisted; then the Earl had sometimes recourse to two odd volumes, which he kept in his doublet, the one part of Guy of Warwick's famed achievements, the other, the Commentaries of Cæsar, and these were the only reading he took from his own castle. Edgar had perused both many times, yet he requested permission to read again; then he craved leave to work the vessel, and during eight hours every day, he performed the regular duties of a seaman. Labour finished, he sprang upon his mattrass at night, and rejoiced in the reflection, that time was not given him in vain; his sleep was sweet, for it was the reward of exercise and temperance. "My father has taught me," said he, "that no man lives for himself alone, consequently, he must have some employment; nay, the very brutes help one another, and some of them spare no pains for the good of the community. Shall man then be more selfish than a creature without a soul?—a bee, an ant, or the beaver?—besides, do not I discover in profound idleness, a perpetual inclination

towards foolish, intoxicating, dangerous thoughts? The fancy, long unrestrained, will be rebellious, and, alas! what shall become of man, when his reason pines under the tyranny of ungoverned imagination!"

The voyage was tedious, and even Beauchamp began to complain. Atheling now soothed him, and led him to converse upon his beloved theme—the Monarch and Prince of England. "Do, my lord," continued he, with mild persuasion, "do, my lord, relate to me concerning Edward's marriage, the birth of his son, the fate of John de Valois of France, all in regularity. You have but given me the events of several years by morsels—for once, dear my lord. I too love my King and my Prince, though my arm have not been like as thine has, lifted in all their battles by sea and land; though my blood have not flowed like thine in defending their sacred rights and person; though time have not planted me by a great monarch, and suffered me to grow, to blossom, to rise up for his comfort, his pride, his stay, his glory—like as thou art. Yet, most noble Warwick, does my heart beat with emulation

emulation of thy greatness and proud fidelity. Tell me then of my King, my country, and my Prince." Beauchamp cared not to shew how deeply he felt the ardent and generous homage of his young friend; yet he forbore not to return the grasp of Atheling's hand, and with a half smile, said, "Why, Edgar, what wouldst thou of a soldier? I understand not making histories; however, to please thee, and to relieve the unvaried scenes around us, I will try; but where begin?"—"From the captivity of John of France," cried Edgar. "What!" returned the Earl, "dost thou not know that the great Prince of Wales exhausted every means to induce the monarch to forget captivity?—that he himself served, and gave him respect, friendship, and even veneration?—that when he had done all he could do to hasten the treaty, and release de Valois, and when he was obliged to conduct him to England and to London, that he entered this metropolis, where a whole mass of people, mad with exultation, with transport, adorned their

dwellings and windows with all their riches?* —that the noble Prince fell back upon a small black palfrey, and sent forward his prisoner, who was mounted on a fiery white courser, richly caparisoned, in token of his sovereignty? Thou noble, thou gracious, thou magnanimous Prince! what tenderness, what friendship, what modest zeal, hadst thou towards thy captive! A whole people, the most generous upon earth, stood astonished in thy grandeur of soul. And when John was released and sent home, and that a peace was sworn to by all the nobles of both courts, upon the holy sacrament† itself, then the great Edward accompanied his friend, and offered his services, not like a great conqueror, but as the most modest, as he is the most glorious of men." —"And," interrupted Atheling, "is John ungrateful?"—"No," said Beauchamp, "John has much generosity of soul; but his son Charles the Regent, who was led by the wicked Charles of Navarre, objected to the terms of peace, and sent back the com-

* Collins's Life of the Black Prince. † Ibid.

commissioners; then John cried out, 'Ah, son Charles! you are led by the King of Navarre, who is too cunning for twenty such as you are!'* and Edward, greatly enraged, replied, 'Ah, sir, your subjects, much against my will, force me to war.' Hereupon, immense preparations were made, and the English army entered France, carrying victory in every step of its progress. The King of England was crowned at Rheims; and the French, at length humbled, sued for peace, which Edward, justly exasperated, for a time refused, but on a most dreadful sign of heaven's displeasure at this resolution, he resisted no longer, and France was saved."

Beauchamp's voice faltered, and he stopped. Atheling remarked not the struggle, and incautiously said, "how, Sir, did the wrath appear?" The Earl collected his firmness, and continued: "in the most dreadful storm that ever raged—wind—hailstones—rain—lightning—thunder. Six thousand † horses perished in it, and near to

* Collins. † Ibid.

to one thousand men—and, alas! my brave Guy, my eldest son, was of the number."

Atheling was distressed that he had urged the subject, and he stood silent. Beauchamp was thoughtful an instant, and then forcing a smile, and smothering the rising sigh, he went on: "then the peace was signed upon the holy sacrament. But I fear for Charles the Regent, for he listened again, and was governed by the worst of men, the King of Navarre." Atheling burned with indignation at the mention of his name. "And is the lady Isabella," said Edgar with timidity, "is she still in Paris?"—"She is given in marriage to John de Visconti, for twenty thousand crowns. Atheling," cried the Earl suddenly, "I can tell thee no more—I understand not the relating of events: thou shalt soon know all, when we arrive at Bourdeaux, where the most valiant Prince of Wales holds his brilliant court, together with his charming Princess, the beautiful Jane of Kent."

Edgar inquired no further, but thanked his friend with warmth for his compliance.

Now,

Now, to the delight of the two nobles, the vessel steered by the pillars of Hercules, and doubling the last point of land, rushed into the Atlantic. In a few days it gained the Tagus, and steering between its shoals, entered the rolling waters; passed the bulky Moor's Fort, cut onward, and flung down the anchor in the vast basin of the city. The high quality of the strangers soon spread, and the Prince of Lusitania, attended by his train, advanced to welcome the English nobles to his country; but they, anxious to depart, petitioned for a vessel to carry them to Bourdeaux. During several days, that one was fitting, the son of the Prince of Lusitania became so ardently attached to the valiant Britons, that he resolved, if he might, to accompany them even to England. Beauchamp was pleased with the royal youth, and willingly took upon him the honour of the charge.* "He hath not received baptism, please ye, my lord," said the Lusitanian father, "and methinks I should love thy name."—"He shall

* Collins's Life of the Black Prince.

shall then be Thomas," cried Warwick; "and I will answer for him,† at the font of St. Peter's Abbey, at Westminster, please heaven I live to see that venerable church again." Thus was the matter arranged; and when the vessel was ready, the Earl of Warwick, the lord Edgar Atheling, and the young Prince of Lusitania set sail for Bourdeaux.

The throbbing breast of Edgar tried to burst his corselet, as the ship ploughed the deep waves of Biscay. Now a tide of blood rushed to his cheek, as he strained his sight to catch the first shadow of land; for that land was the possession of England; it contained England's subjects; it boasted English valour; it gloried in the precious trust of England's darling hope, its beloved treasure, the magnanimous son of her lofty monarch, the virtuous Prince of Wales. Atheling spoke not, he scarce tasted food; he rose up—he walked—then again threw himself upon a bench, determined to wait with patience for the signal; and then, upon

* Collins.

upon a whisper—a word—he started up the tackle and ropes: and with a trembling agitation, yet silent, looked and strained his vision, till night quite obscured all prospect. At length, overpowered by exertion and vigils, he fell into a profound sleep. "Land!" cried the commander to Beauchamp, for he saw faint lights of the beacons. "Most joyful news!" replied Beauchamp; "yet waken not my lord Atheling, Sirs, I charge ye, lest he gain no more sleep this night; for the city of Bourdeaux is yet far distant, and no wind stirs to favour us."

The unconscious Edgar wakened not during eight hours. He started upward—when lo! the glorious sun had just begun to gild the palaces of man: and he saw, amazed and wild with joy, that the sails were filled, and drove on the ship with rapidity down the Garonne. "Can it be, dear my lord?" cried Atheling, as he grasped his hand—"is it a dream? are we in truth so near?"—"Aye, Edgar," answered the Earl, "'tis in truth Bourdeaux; and I guess we may soon pay our homage to

to Prince Edward, as he is an early riser, and 'twill be pleasant news, I judge, to give him, for he is a most gracious prince towards his subjects."—"Yes, it is indeed!" said Atheling: "yon trees I remember—the slope—the valley—the rising hills beyond—oh heaven, thou art too good! my joy is too strong! Now to see my Prince—then my friends, my country, in a few days—'tis too strong!"

The vessel was anchored. Beauchamp, talkative and laughing, flung into a bark; Edgar, pale and silent, followed. They land—they approach the palace—they are admitted—the Black Prince hastens to meet them—they kneel before him—he presses them both with ardour to his generous breast—pours forth to his faithful servants the warmest praise, and then himself leads on to splendid apartments, where his guests may refresh after the toils of the voyage; invites them to come afterwards to his table, and then hastens to his Princess with the joyful tidings.

The Earl of Warwick, charmed by the sight of the great Edward, and proud in his

his reception, gave loose to his pleasure, and talked with rapidity, and recounted the exploits of England's heir. Atheling, as a man who had exhausted the powers of nature, drew his respiration with labour; gasping, he opened the casement, and loosened his armour. Beauchamp noticed him not, but paced in his own chamber, to and from that in which Edgar sat. "Prithee hasten, Atheling," said he, "or we shall not be prepared for the repast." Edgar immediately began the ablutions; and when ready, attended his friend to the saloon.

There sat, in a blaze of beauty, the Princess of Wales, and in her arms the young child, Edward, her first-born son.[114] Near her was her noble consort, who led the guests forward, and presented them as they bent the knee; when with sweet kindness she bade them welcome, and inquired concerning their travels, as she placed into their arms her infant son. Both nobles kissed the hand of the royal child, and Warwick then craved leave to present the young Prince of Lusitania.

The

The son of Mercia spoke little; but the great Prince and his beautiful bride were pleased with his sparkling eye, his loyal devotedness, and profound and affectionate respect. They read in his ingenuous features that modesty, joy, gratitude, and love, only restrained his flow of words; and by a sweet and touching attention and questions, they encouraged him to conversation. But Edgar was still as a man confounded; his food lay untouched before him, and vast oppression leaned over his forehead. In vain he tried to conquer, to rally, to avert, to subdue; a deathly paleness crept over his features, and he raised his hand to his head. The Princess first observed, and whispered to Edward. The Black Prince instantly rose, and approached him; "try the air, cousin, and take our arm—you suffer from the vessel's confinement."—"Your highness is too—too condescending, too gracious," said Edgar; and Edward, beholding his distress, called to a knight just by, and gave him in charge. Atheling reeled forward, and descending a few steps, sat on the staircase, and felt revived

vived by the fresh air, which blew sharply. A message was presently sent, to inquire of his health, from the Prince of Wales; and Edward next came himself, and finding Atheling rather mended, gave him to his gentlemen, and hurried away with important advices to the council. Edgar thanked the knight for his kind cares, and was staggering away, when a messenger ran in haste, and loudly whispered, "the Lord de Clifford will of needs see you this morning."—"Is he then worse?" said the knight aloud. "No, Sir," replied the messenger; "but he is very urgent, and will not be denied."—"'Tis most unlucky," answered the knight, "for my Prince hath charged me to remain in the palace the whole day, to wait an errand of importance. What should be done? In truth, my lord is to blame, and I will conceal the matter no longer, for his highness will rebuke me, if any harm happen."

Atheling seized a balustrade, and with a violent effort, said "what name?"—"De Clifford—the Lord de Clifford," said the knight; "he is two miles beyond Bourdeaux,

deaux, in a mean cot; and though he is almost sick to death, yet he will not permit me to mention to my lord, the Prince, and I fear he will die."—" Tell him," said the knight, turning to the man, " that I will send for his commands; and if it be possible, I will myself see him before midnight." The man was retreating, but Atheling suddenly burst his silence; wildness glared in his eye, and he said, " wait! I will go with thee." The man astonished, bowed and stood. Atheling in a moment rushed up the stairs, met Warwick in breathless emotion, mentioned de Clifford—and the word death—and cried, " tell the Prince." —" Yes, yes," answered Warwick, " the Prince will excuse thee—I trust report may exaggerate when it asserts this brave captain to be so ill. His highness surely knows not of the matter." Atheling heard not the answer, he had rushed down to the porch, and commanded the messenger to set forward; he spoke not, but strode with phrenzied movement by the man, who in amazement ran by his side to measure steps with him. They passed the suburbs—entered

tered the fields—crossed a narrow path—the man pointed to a small habitation. Edgar sprang to it—drove up the latch—looked round—no one was there—a room was beyond—he passed to it and opened the door—he gazed.

Upon a mattrass on the ground, with poor but cleanly coverings, lay stretched the figure of a man, pale, wan, emaciated; his hollow eyes were closed—but the sudden entrance of the visitor opened them. Atheling gazed—" de Clifford!—most dear de Clifford!" he uttered and dropped senseless upon the earth.

The sick man started up at the sound of the voice he loved; but he could not support the agitation of his exhausted frame, and he sank again on his pillow. Atheling strong and in the bloom of life, immediately recovered; stopped for an instant to smooth the current of his thoughts, and rushing to the bed, seized the hand of his friend, pressed it in his own, and then kind nature relieved his oppressed heart, and he spoke—" oh de Clifford, what has ailed thee—why art thou here? Why, after so long

long an absence, do I thus meet thee estranged from thy prince? Oh! say what is thy illness—speak, that we may minister to thy wants—whence camest thou? Oh ever dear, my friend, speak; and let me send for aid."

De Clifford pressed the hand that held his to his parched lip—then dropped it, raised the coverlid, and hid his visage. "Dear, my lord," said Atheling, "wilt thou not speak to me? Recollect, de Clifford—'tis Edgar Atheling, thy once loved friend—speak then and tell him all thy grief—he has a heart to share it with thee, and an arm to punish, if any have wronged thee."

"Oh, Atheling, cease so kindly to speak to me," cried de Clifford; "if I recollect thee? Oh heavens! noble and magnanimous friend—if I recollect thee, my preserver!"—"Cease those words—so to talk," interrupted Edgar, mournfully, "if thou knowest I love thee, tell me only of thy illness, that we may hope and save thee."

De Clifford raised himself up and for a moment leaned on his arm; then looking in

in the face of his friend, said, speaking low, "'tis too late—I must die—in the full prime of manhood; and leave this world, and thee Atheling, behind. I have petitioned for mercy on my sins, and they are many; I have seen the minister, and have joined in the last communion—and I now resign myself, with trembling hope, to another world; but, oh Edgar! 'tis a fearful passage to pass—'tis so dreary when one approaches by slow, lingering, doubting steps!—in the field of battle 'tis sudden, unthought of; but from the bed of sickness, an awful contemplation." Edgar grasped his trembling hand; "tell me," said he, with a faltering voice, "tell me thy malady, and despond not—all may yet be well."

"Ah no; for Atheling I die by poison." "By poison!" cried Atheling with horror. "Oh dreadful!" de Clifford continued—"it has been ravaging my frame, during more than two years—all that medicine can do, has been tried—I have languished long and suffered—what tortures, oh my soul! —agony has gnawed my vitals by day and

by night—my very bones pierce their shrivelled covering—my breast is hollow—last evening I was speechless—to-day I am a little revived—but now—thy presence, my Atheling.....say, didst thou recollect immediately all the remains that torture has left of de Clifford?"

Edgar could not reply—and his friend proceeded. "I am rejoiced to see thee, and yet the grief of thy kind heart pains me, Atheling; but I wish thee to hear my sad story—'tis short; besides, my family will look to thee for my last moments! Yes, I will speak; for 'tis sweet to cast one's errors and sins before an ear that listens kindly; and a tongue that will not magnify when it repeats again! Listen, Atheling—joyful I am to be blessed with thee—to none other would I relate the unhappy narration.

"Thou knowest the violent passions which nature gave me. These should have been regulated, not extirpated, in infancy—but alas! they were cherished in me till they mastered reason. I have heard my mother blame thine for neglecting thy study,

study, and thinking only of thy disposition in early life; but oh! that mine had so acted by me! I was taught in the earliest years from books and masters various matters that have never benefitted me; whilst the culture of reason was neglected. Skilled in manly exercise, with much superficial knowledge, I rushed to the army of my King bold, fierce, undaunted, headstrong, furious in every passion, I returned from Cresсy—was caressed at court—my mother exulted in me; but growing up to man's estate, my violence broke around in a hundred injurious ways. Opposition drove me wild, whilst intemperance of various kinds irritated my vassals against me. One old man boldly remonstrated with me for assailing him in his parental interests—exasperated, I threw a shield at his arm and crushed it. In an agony of distress, I knelt for his forgiveness—he spurned me away—I snatched as much massive family plate as I could bear, and ran to his house with it as a compensation—he sent it back; touched to the heart, I know not what step I might have taken, had I not been guarded by my

mother. Some time after this, I saw thee—I was struck with thy modest demeanour and the reason apparent in all thy actions. No, Atheling; I will not pain thee by hinting at thy noble perfections—I loved—I feared—I esteemed thee—I wished to resemble thee—but I must hasten—my time is short.

"Through my impetuosity, thou wast nearly ruined with thy father—how deep sank thy generous conduct in my breast! we arrived in this city—I endeavoured to imitate thy temperate life—for sometime I succeeded; for I dreaded thy disdain. We fought at Poictiers—I, by my mad zeal was carried too far, and taken prisoner—I was dying and thou with generosity, never to be enough extolled, gave thyself into captivity to save me, though thou so well knewest thou shouldst be debarred from seeing thy beloved family."

"'Tis false! de Clifford," interrupted Atheling, with eager agitation, "'tis false; I knew not of it. I guessed I should be immediately ransomed—there was no merit. Oh, de Clifford, do not pain me thus by praise undeserved which my soul abhors!"

"Ever

" Ever consistent, ever noble, ever the same! oh that I had earlier known and made thee my model!" returned the friend; " be not angry, Edgar; they are my last words; a dying man hath no need to flatter."

" Saved by thee, I was transported to the army—the wound in my head took much time to heal. I was not recovered, when the kind Prince ordered the few sick of his army to be conveyed by gentle stages to Bourdeaux, that we might want for nothing—the wound affected my senses —all seemed stupified within my head—still at intervals, I called loudly and furiously for thee—my attendants dared not tell me of thy sacrifice, lest I should have been raging mad—I called upon thee—I abused thee—but at length I recovered, the whole was revealed—I would have rushed to Paris—but Edward heard of my mad conduct, and commanded me to England upon a mission to the court. Edward with kind complacence, reasoned with me upon the little utility of such a rashness; he declared that both he and

his royal father had resolved to use every means, and to offer the largest ransom to regain so brave a warrior, and so loved a peer. I listened softened by the assurance, and Edward himself went with me to the vessel—I embarked for England. Again all my passions rose—again I plunged into excess—alas! Edgar, thine influence grew weaker;—but again I was roused—Chaucer, the venerable poet, was employed in an embassage to Venice;—it was declared that I should accompany him as colleague; I parted with my lovely bride—I sailed away—oh heaven!"

"Stop—stop—I conjure thee," said Atheling, with trembling haste, as the tale drew deeper.—"Oh, de Clifford, thou wilt be exhausted;—agitate not thus thyself by reproaches."—"Yes—'twill be soon over;" interrupted the sick friend—"and what a lesson will my sad story present!—but listen—we arrived in Venice, I was gay, wild, thoughtless—oh for breath and words!—I mixed in all companies. In a palace near me, lived a noble Venetian, who had married an Egyptian lady. She

was

was—oh what colours shall I draw her in! —she had an eye brilliant as light, and black as ebony — her dark tresses—but enough—'tis all over. I forgive her—the husband was ill and confined—the lady—death snatched away the Venetian. She offered me her hand—I acknowledged my marriage—she dissembled—I drank unconscious the deadly draught—Nourrayah was revenged, and she fled. Oh 'twas a horrible story!—it rouses up my blood—my brain—feel how it burns—my head—what dizziness!—hush—be calm, thou throb—oh for mercy—and forgiveness—Atheling, by our friendship—remember me in thy ....."

The cold blooded lip of Atheling quivered back the word, Nourrayah—it was not heard—he put his clenched hand to his temples—his brain too whirled around;—his ear rang; now and then a scream burst round it;—the arteries throbbed;—a film covered his eye—his knee struck the other —a cold damp gathered round him,—and all was silence—deep—vast—awful—profound, for it was the stillness of death.

A soul had just passed away, and Nature watched its exit..—O tremendous crash! which separates life from death!—how short the step!—'tis passed in a moment. Earth recedes — Eternity begins—begins, never, never to end!

Stillness sat in the chamber of death, when the door turned on its hinge, and the venerable priest clad in dark robes, with noiseless movement stood by the bed; his arms were folded across his breast—his devout look was bent to the ground—he perceived the speechless agony of Atheling, and judged him to be the friend of whom the penitent had often spoken. He stood—but no sound was heard—he raised his eye and saw that de Clifford was a corpse. At this sight he bowed low; lifted the small crucifix, and kneeling down, touched the forehead of the dead—the embers of life's flame still glowed—" his soul yet lingers near its late habitation;" said he, " in a low voice, let us cheer its passage to realms of eternity." Then in a solemn and devout posture he began:

" Arise! soul of repentant man! arise! leave

leave this bed of dross and misery, leave this frame of sorrow, of suffering, of guilt; arise, and prepare to meet the Redeemer of the world. Prepare with humble hope; for he has witnessed thy deep sorrow, thy long contrition, thine agonizing chastisement, and He will have mercy.

" Arise! oh enfranchised soul and flee away. Thou quittest with the image of man, the dominion of sin—thou leavest the fragile and vain honours of a mortal world, for glory never-ending—thy existence here has been but short; but where thou art fleeing to, thou shalt find life everlasting.

" Arise, with trembling hope, oh man of guilt, but sinner repentant! If thy glory be not so bright as the righteous man's shall be, yet, let us humbly trust, thy tears, thy prayers, thy supplications, have not been rejected, and that bliss may be thine, although not the highest—for as the cherubim excel the angels, so we humbly trust the guilty who forsakes his path, and is sincerely penitent, may be allowed to rise, and may be accepted.

" Arise! and flee away, soul of mortal man! the struggle of death is passed by, and life is now to thee as a dream. Where are now the hot passions that fired thy breast?—where the enjoyments for which thou couldst almost barter heaven?—where thy mad hopes?—thy wild desires? Oh what avail thee now all thy pleasures—all thy triumphs?—all that remains is a frame of dust, which corruption is, even now, standing near to call her own—the worm is gaping to embrace thee, and the cold, cold earth is opening to hug thee to primitive dust.

" Arise, then, and mount to a throne of mercy; cast thyself before it, and mayst thou be admitted—and, oh purified soul! when thou art received into mansions of bliss, earnestly join in supplication for us, who are yet clogged with sin and mortality; and if it be possible, intercede in thy beatitude; that so in the last dreadful moment, when nature starts, and death draws his cold hand over our brows, we too, and all mankind, may be strengthened by hope, and

and cheered in the prospect of pardon, mercy, and acceptance."

The minister ceased. Atheling had started up on the first words; and beholding his friend was no more, fell prostrate by the holy man, and with clasped hands and swimming eyes, listened to the solemn address to the dead. Both remained long in silent prayer. At length, Edgar bending low, and with eye cast downward, said,—"Oh, reverend father, by the side of this corpse, this corpse once so dear, listen to my avowal—hear what a Providence hath done for me—listen, and teach me how to praise my God that I am saved—that I did not suffer and be now like him—like thee, my beloved de Clifford. Oh listen;—for one temptation hath assaulted us both."

The priest humbly bent with his arms again folded on his breast, as he heard the rapid and self-accusing story of Atheling's departure from home to his residence in Egypt. He waited till the full and artless confession was ended, and then the hoary-headed man slowly replied:

"Thy life, oh my son, seemeth as one

perpetuated link in the great chain of Providence. Let us not with impious confidence presume to suppose, that the mere trifling circumstances of day and day are directed or ordered by Supreme Wisdom, but the grand, the leading design and events seem to be intended to give knowledge for everlasting benefit, and to try to their foundation, and to add force to, the principles of man.

" Hadst thou been destitute of principle, hadst thou not had some foundation, thou wouldst surely have fallen in some of thy trials; I mean not to insinuate that thou art perfect even as faulty man may be; I, sinner as I am, with one foot reeling in the tomb, and leaning over the bed of death, should I utter falsehoods when the young and the heedless seek assistance? Should I presume to mislead? No, my son; I perceive in all thy movement, in all thy words, that in violence and strength of passions, thou art born equal to this thy faded friend. But blessings on the hand that trained thee; but for the strong, the deep sense of duty to God and man, which

the

the parent or guardian of thine infancy and youth, must have instilled into thee, but for these, thine excess had been as great, thy punishment perhaps deeper than his whom we now deplore. Impetuous and ardent, thy wanderings, thy crosses, thine exile, have taught thee patience; thy escape at last, from every peril, has taught thee, that all is possible with Him who directs the universe; thy mad joy, which almost deprived thee of reason, has received a sudden check, to shew thee, that violent, ungovernable, intemperate happiness is not for man; and finally, by this awful spectacle, thou art seemed to have been, as it were, waited for, to shew thee that end at which all must arrive at last, and to caution thee against any life but such as will secure thee from the cutting, dreadful reproaches of a bed of death. All the experience of thy life, seems directed to the quelling of thy passions. Oh, my son, my son, be wise; thou knowest thy duty, thou hast been well taught. Trebly dreadful the guilt of him, remember, who acts wrong, and yet has a full knowledge of what

what is right; the Scriptures tell us that where much is given, much shall be required; if thou art blessed with good knowledge apply it well, restrain thy passions; be true to thy Maker, and live in honest fellowship with man; be active, be faithful, be humble, be grateful; so may heaven bless thee, my son, even as it hath already done, and so mayst thou taste the true, the only joy, reserved for man, the joy of a well-spent life, and a conscience without stain or reproach."

The venerable man placed his withered hands on the head of Edgar, who profoundly affected and humbled to the earth in his own estimation, and the wondrous goodness of Providence, hardly dared to breathe, lest he should lose a word of the solemn warning of piety and virtue; but the voice ceased; and Atheling, without daring to lift an eye, respectfully took the hand that was not yet unstrung from the fervour of devotion, and pressed it with gratitude and tenderness between his own. The minister read the emotion which found no words for expression; he returned the pressure

pressure still more affectionately; whilst his countenance resumed its mild serenity.

Atheling then fixed his lamenting gaze upon his departed friend—he feared to indulge a grief, yet it again swelled in his tender breast, and he averted his head to conceal it. "Mistake me not, my son," said the observing priest, "in checking the violence of passions, religion never intends us to arm our bosoms with apathy and cold indifference to the sweet feelings of humanity. Thou hast loved the soul which inhabited this clay; 'tis natural that thou shouldst feel, and feel with anguish, the separation. Indulge a sorrow which is becoming to man; which humbles his pride, instructs his piety, and confirms his good resolutions. I will assist thee to perform the last offices, to bind up this drooping head which beats no more, to close the dim eye; to stretch side by side these stiffning hands, and to smoothe these perished limbs. Thou shalt watch by the dead, whilst I hasten to prepare the vault, and let loose the deep vibration of the passing bell."

Edgar

Edgar made no reply, and the kind minister, accustomed to the melancholy duties of death, with tender delicacy and silent respect, prepared the corpse for its last and narrow habitation. Atheling too assisted, but he leaned from time to time on the wall, to hide his affliction, and relieve his aching heart. And now with soft tread, the minister was about to depart, when the Earl of Warwick, accompanied by the knight, suddenly appeared. They caught a sight of the corpse, and started back; the priest advanced to meet them, and relate what he deemed necessary to unfold, and with gentleness closed the chamber in which Atheling, unconscious of any footstep near, sat drooping by the dead.

Beauchamp heard with sorrow the mournful news of the warrior whom he had esteemed and admired; he respected the grief of Atheling, and silently measured back his steps to the palace.

The tidings met Edward's ear; he grieved for a faithful subject and a valiant knight, and commanded that if it were not the wish

wish of the deceased to have a private burial, that he should be publicly and magnificently interred; but the priest waited on the generous Edward, and declared that in his last interview with the Lord de Clifford, he had esteemed himself unworthy the notice of his monarch, and earnestly prayed his bones might be laid in the sepulchre in privacy, and in the hours of darkness. The good Prince then yielded, but desired to defray the expenses.

At the solemn hour of midnight, the Earl of Warwick, who requested to join in paying the last tribute of regard, attended by Edgar, followed the dead to the chapel of the Abbey, and saw the deep grave ready to receive the corpse. The priest in solemn and pious tone, read the funeral service, and the full voices of the choir chaunted, at long drawn intervals, the responses. Atheling held his hand over his forehead till the moment in which the dear remains were to be hidden, when he strained a look, but grief prevented his perception—the earth dropped pitiless on the coffin—it was soon lost to the sight, and the

Earl,

Earl, much moved, put his arm within Edgar's, and gently drew him away. A car waited at the gate; Beauchamp, kindly helping his friend, took the reins, and driving forward, soon reached the palace.

Edgar remained several days in his chamber, for grief, for reflection, for solitude; but the minister, who constantly roved about on errands of charity, stood before him, and mildly endeavoured to cheer his spirit, and to divert his sorrow. The next day, therefore, he refused not to descend, when Beauchamp earnestly pressed him, but the late awful event had too powerfully usurped the feelings of Edgar to be forgotten. Temperate, patient, humble, Atheling was the same Atheling, but he had acquired stronger virtue, more profound principles, fuller submission to reason, and more mistrust of self, by the last awful lesson; and whilst his youth, his manly grace, his majestic deportment attracted the admiration of the whole brilliant court of Edward; Edgar lived untainted by flattery, uncorrupted amidst riches and grandeur, and unmoved in the bright reverse of fortune.

Mean-

Meantime a fleet was prepared to sail for England, and the Earl of Warwick was invested as Lord High Admiral of England, with the command. The Prince of Wales embraced, with much affection, Atheling, and made him valuable presents; he besides wrote with his own hand a letter of praise and regard to the Earl of Mercia, and to the King of England, and sealing them with the royal arms, delivered both to Edgar, who knelt to receive them; but the great and good Prince strained him to his breast, and presenting him to the Princess, "We bid farewell to my cousin," said he, smiling, "we could fain wish that the marriage whereof my Lord of Warwick hath spoken, could be solemnized in our presence, but the King, our father, will have equal joy in bestowing the bride, and in uniting the noblest peerage of his realms." The Lord Beauchamp bowed low, and Atheling blushed; but he paid with gratitude his sincere homage for the distinguished favour, and then hastening to the boat, which made its signals, quickly reached the fleet, once more scaled the wooden bulwarks,

bulwarks, and in a few moments the whole navy steered for England.

The heart of Atheling beat high in his breast as prosperous winds blew him to the shores he loved; but fears and doubt now tempered his joy, and he half trembled to indulge the powerful emotion. But how violent was the struggle between nature and reason, when the soft dove-coast of southern England first smiled upon him through the silver shades of distance! "Oh my country, my country!" burst from his lip, whilst his swimming eye could scarce discern her lily forehead; but the fleet advanced with rapidity, it ploughed the channel's entrance, and left Biscay far behind. Atheling, ever on deck; silent, mistrustful, doubting, fearful of indulging excess of joy, lest another lesson of humiliation might follow, fixed his ardent gaze on the skirts of his beloved Cornwall. "Edgar, the fleet is bound for London," said Beauchamp, "but I will make thy excuses to the King—land thou in the Bay of Seton, 'tis near thy paternal mansion. I will command yon swift sailor to conduct thee, and afterwards

afterwards follow us; 'tis but slackening our sail, and losing a few hours; and, moreover, I was thus advised by the Prince of Wales, who judged thou wouldst be impatient to meet thy family. I myself will join thee at Restormal, when I may leave my King."—"Kind and dear Beauchamp, most generous and courteous of princes!" cried Edgar, "rejoiced will be my father to see thee; if, oh, if I have yet one! My lord, what think you? How looked he when ye last met? Is it likely that he now lives? Oh, Sir, my heart misgives me."—"He looked, Edgar, well as usual," returned Warwick; "thy fears are, I guess, ill founded. I trust we shall all meet, and meet in joy." Atheling smiled timidly, but caught at the hope; he pressed the hand of the good Earl between his own, and said, "My beloved, my respected friend, my second father, accept my gratitude, my thanks, for all the many benefits I hold from you; they are, my lord, for ever engraven on my heart; and my respect and my affection, which I have not words to represent, will cease but with my life."

Beauchamp

Beauchamp wrung his hand. "Go, my dear son, for I love to call thee my son, and to class thee in my family, go—I scarce love thy father better than thee—on my breast is it besides for ever registered, that I owe my life to thee; I cannot ever repay thy zeal, but with my daughter. When I have flung myself at the feet of the best of monarchs, I will hasten away and conduct my lady and child to thy mother, and deliver the message which the King gives me; for sure I am he will rejoice to fulfil the engagement which the Prince of Wales, his darling son, has made in his name. Then will we all set forward, and join to do honour to thy nuptials. Edward is a princely monarch, and has no common favour towards thy house and mine." The Earl now embraced Edgar, whose eye sparkled again in these encouraging words — the little vessel had grappled close, and Atheling sprang forward to its deck—it then unmoored, and cut away for the shores which were at no great distance. On signals made, a boat left the haven. Edgar in a few moments descended to it, when the

the vessel instantly tacked about, and joining the fleet which had laid by, was soon wafted from sight in the breeze.

Atheling, with trembling emotion which beat across his breast, in every shape of doubt, joy, and dread, looked at the two seamen who rowed the boat. "Oh!" thought he, "that they could guess the question which I dare not ask!—Is there," said he, with a careless lip, as if to give assurance to himself, "is there, my friends, aught of news in these parts? Has any event — any particular event, happened lately?" The man rested upon the oar, rubbed the open forehead with artless eagerness to consider; then looking up, one replied, "Please ye, my lord, no; we think not."—"Ah!" cried Edgar, with joy, "do ye then know me?"—"No, Sir Knight," answered the man, "but methinks the master of the vessel called you my lord. You have doubtless been fighting in our battles, Sir, and welcome now to Old England's shores."—"Thank ye, my brave countrymen," replied Atheling, and he smiled in pride as he heard the manly voice, the

the tones of freedom, the sentiment of open warm hospitality of generous-hearted Britons. "No," said he aloud, "there is no servile flattery, no humiliating debasement, no horror of the tyrant's frown, no unmanly subjection, or inordinate dominion here. A King here reigns t e father of his people; he desires no more than what they may give as men and as freemen —a whole nation looks up to him as children to a parent; as the cementer, the fountain-head of all their interests, their hopes, their rights; they love him, they respect him, they pray for him; his joys are their's, and not a grief has he which his people do not commiserate."—"That is true, Sir," observed the boatman, who had attentively listened, "for whatever be our humble life, we all love our King. I have six children, my lord; and every one, to the youngest, mentions the King in his prayers night and morn."—"And may you be blessed for instructing them so well, friend," said Edgar.

The boat was now pulled in, and the Prince stepped to the beach—on the beach he

he knelt; grasped a handful of earth, pressed it to his lip, and with fervour, said, "I bless thee, heaven, for thus permitting my return to the land of my nativity; and thou, oh country most beloved, I salute thee!" He then poured coins into the sailor's hands, and hastened on, with breathless strides, to the town. Here his first care was for a horse; he hurried to the post-house;—with trembling agitation he spoke. "Surely," said the master, with honest diffidence, "I crave your pardon, but you resemble much my Lord of Mercia, who lives some leagues from hence."—"Lives! didst thou say?" cried Atheling, seizing his hand. "Aye, Sir," replied the man, "and I guess you are my lord, his son. I was at Lestwythiel fourteen nights since, [115] and saw my lady on the ramparts with the lady visitors."—"Enough!" cried the Prince, "enough;—thy best steed.—Come to Restormal—enquire for me, for my lord's son, I will repay thee."

Full of delight, Atheling himself followed to the stables—saddled the steed—vaulted on his back—plunged the dividing

river—gained the frontiers of Cornwall, and rushed forward; whilst joy, thrilling joy, ran through every vein as he recognized haunts, trees, villages, clumps, streams. Panting, he stopped at Launceston, to give breath to the foaming steed; he saw an old vassal approach with hesitating and inquisitive look. Edgar sprang to him. "Yes, my friend, it is I; my lord's son,—speak—my father?—quick!" The old man started back with joy and wonder. "Oh, happy day!—most joyous news!—my lord was well as usual yesterday; I saw him myself in Restormal Park, on his old steed."—"Thanks, good old man," exclaimed Edgar, and shook his withered hand, "my heart will misgive me in spite of myself. Give me water; let me wash the feet of the good steed; moisten her foaming jaws; give me straw to smooth down her ruffled coat; give her a morsel of provender, and we fly!—Tell not my name till I am gone, lest I be detained." Then Atheling, with vigorous strokes, brushed down the charger; refreshed her exhausted spirit; patted her swelling

swelling throat, and springing on her back, lifted high his helmet to the crowds that had now assembled, and was out of sight in a few moments.

Soon rose in solemn magnificence the wide battlements of Restormal Castle. Edgar gave a scream of joy, as he perceived them—his breath shortened—doubts again chilled his soul, and curdled his vein from the head downward. "Oh why," thought he mournfully, "should joy be supportable to man only when it is mixed and alloyed with fear!" Then he caught a nearer view—the river sparkled between trees; he rushed on—passed the hill—beheld the ramparts—the gate. The centinel gazed: "hail, friend!" cried Edgar, as he passed him; the man knew the voice; the cross-bow and spear fell from his arm—he stood silent. 'Twas nearly dusk. Athelling gallopped to the court-yard—flung from the steed—rushed among the bewildered domestics—stepped on the threshold of his paternal mansion—would have burst on, but prudence, dread, doubt, now held him back. The aged steward met him; "where

is my mother, is she well?—and my father? speak."—" Is it, then, my lord?" replied the domestic. " Yes, good friend; but speak—happiness—I know not where to find words."—" Sir—my lord—your lady mother still walks the terrace gardens, on the other side of the castle; my lord is above with the chaplain."—" 'Tis well," cried Edgar, " I know my father's strong soul; yet I beg thee to hasten and tell him I am arrived." The old man, loquacious, eager tottered to the Earl's apartment. Atheling followed close. " My lord Edgar—your son, my lord," exclaimed the old man, in a laughing and half-weeping tone. " What doth he say, father?" said the agitated Earl to the chaplain. " That I, oh my beloved parent, my father, my friend—that I, your son...—'tis I myself, your own Edgar, oh my beloved father," cried Atheling, flinging himself upon the ground, and clasping his knee.

The Earl spoke not for an instant—yet his trembling hands fell on the neck of his son. " My father!" said Edgar; " oh speak to me—let me hear my father's blessing;

sing; how is my own dear father, my parent, and mine early friend?" The Earl raised his head. "Oh kind and gracious Providence!" said he, with fervent devotion, "thou beneficent care, that hast watched over all my wants, my desires; thou, gracious heaven, that hast granted me every fondest wish, as a parent, a husband, a friend, and a man; that deignest now, even now, that my trembling foot stands over the grave, to give me all I dared ask of thee on this side of eternity; to give me back my son, my child, my pride, my second existence—to me, insect as I stand before thee—how be grateful!—how speak! Oh, mine Edgar, my son, let me press thee to this aged breast; and then, Lord of heaven and earth, I stand firm and prepared for the last great change." Thus spoke the old man, whilst he spread his venerable arms on his only child, his head bent down to his, and his silver locks fluttered on the bright studded mail of Edgar, and mingled with the fine auburn of youth.

The servant wept, and the chaplain; but

the former slid away, to seek his lady. Again the Earl embraced and blessed his son. "Is my Beauchamp," said he, "arrived? how fares the Prince?"—"He is well, my father," answered Edgar; "but Lord Beauchamp commands the fleet, and will be with us shortly; I am alone."—"Then haste, find thy mother," replied Mercia, "she has doubtless heard the news, and is too happy."

Atheling sprang forward. A small foot slid along the corridor—the door burst open; "where, where is he, my own Edgar?" cried the sweet voice of maternal tenderness. Atheling would have kneeled to his charming mother, but she folded him in her arms, and imprinted on his glowing cheek the fond and tender memorials of her joy and love. "Oh, mine Edgar, how art thou grown! how risen into maturity! Give us lights—let me see his countenance; my son, my darling pride. Why was such happiness reserved for me? and I dreaded never, never to see thee more! How have we suffered in thy long absence!—and after every danger so well

—so..."

—so ...." and again the lady flung her polished arm of ivory on the proud and happy young warriour, whilst a shower of chrystal tears fell down her soft cheek, even unto his.

The Earl listened with complacent delight to the effusions of his lady; his breast answered in affection to her's; but he restrained the rushing tide of joy, and listened. Quickly were large tapers placed near the Countess. She brushed off the lingering dew upon her dark lashes, and, sweetly smiling, raised the light to the features of her blushing son. "Yes, 'tis mine Edgar, my own child—but infancy and childhood are fled away; how embrowned thy cheek—how audacious—yes, thy father just so looked, when I first raised a glance upon his countenance; the bright and daring eye—the winning smile—the luxuriant ringlet—the majestic front—the modest demeanour. How art thou expanded! how improved! Oh Edgar, my child, I could be too proud of thee."

Atheling, deeply blushing, returned with filial tenderness the caresses of his mother,

but he stood confounded in the praise. The lady observed with increased delight his modest confusion. "Come," said the Earl, "let us attend our guests; our joy in thy return, Edgar, confounds thy mother and me, we know not how to give it shape; give me thine arm." Atheling instantly sprang to his parent, without a question; he cast a look at the old man, and started to see the change of a few years. He felt too the arm, that clung to him for support, tremble within his; the step was unsteady—he observed, and he was silent.

The Lady Elgiva hastened onward, to prepare the guests; and presently Atheling seated his father in the saloon. His mother seized his hand, and led him to a lady, who rose to meet him. Edgar, with modest grace, bowed doubtful. The lady smiled. "Do you not recollect the Lady Beauchamp?" said his mother. Atheling started, and pressed her extended hand to his lip; "and the Lady Julia, her lovely daughter?" added she, and taking the reluctant

luctant maid by the hand, presented her to her son.

Now the whole soul of Atheling mounted in his cheek, flitted away, and returned. He would have moved to the lady, who bent her beauteous head downward, but his knee trembled, and stood fixed and motionless. The mother of Julia smiled. "I wonder not that you are suprised, my lord; my daughter is altered since you visited our castle; even her father scarce recognizes his child, after every campaign. 'Tis some years since we met; you have doubtless seen much warfare, and met with numberless events." Atheling, grateful for the relief, shortly replied; and soon the company descended to the hall, for the evening repast.

The news had spread. Dependants and vassals crowded to the hospitable board; every eye sought the young chief, who bent and passed among a people that adored his ripened virtues. To some he bowed—of some he grasped the hand—and the little cherubs, that had risen into life since his departure, he saluted and held

by turns in his arms, as the proud mothers lifted and offered them around him. At length, all was solemn silence. The noble guests at the elevated table in the centre stood up, and the Earl with impressive gratitude blessed heaven for the food and comforts of life; he this night added a few more words, they were of praise for the safe return of his son; a thousand voices, trembling in joy and eagerness, pronounced fervently the single word of response—and instantly all were seated. The smoking viands were in a moment divided; all was joy, fulness, and plenty. The Earl threw up his hand—the trumpeter opposite watched, and gave a blast. Again was death-like silence. The Earl arose; "my friends," said he, "this shall be a night of rejoicing; first we will exult in the triumphs of our country—second, we will glory in the unrivalled majesty of England's throne, in the noblest of monarchs, the most exalted and magnanimous of princes—thirdly, I, as a father, you as my people, and my dear countrymen, shall be happy in the restoration of mine only child,

child, after an absence of nearly eight years. Give the reins to mirth, but be temperate; let none steel his breast to feeling, but only to excess. All my stores shall be spread to exhilirate your breasts; the dance—the song—the jest—the sport—are all yours. Only speak; and food, viands, the sparkling wine, the hissing mead, the fermented ale, meet every want, and anticipate every desire. Freedom is your birthright, for are ye not Englishmen? but this night take double privilege—be joyful—but let harmony and temperance prevail."

Acclamations burst and rang even to the vaulted roof, swelling in echo through every arch, as Mercia ceased. "Music! give us music," shouted the throng: "give us the song of peace, the warrior's return—give us music!"

The harper waited the signal. A cold shiver crept through his frame. Sudden the boiling blood dashed impatient from his heart--his cheek glowed—his eye sparkled in extatic rage—his lip trembled to pour forth the images that trampled o'er

his mind's eye—he snatched the harp—broke up the fervour of his soul in rapid modulation, and then sang:—

I.

Hark! the battle rings no more,
The clangour dies away;
Wash and cleanse the knotted gore,
Couch the lance, and strike no more,
The foes for mercy pray.
Bind up the gash,
The spouting vein;
A standing foe may rouse the ire,
But fall'n, that ire were vain.

II.

Give the tear the comrade's due,
O'er his slight simple grave;
Roll ev'ry deed round mem'ry's clew,
Fair honour registers anew,
And swells the banner's wave!
Now to the feast,
And now the song;
When justice calls we fling the dart,
And triumph o'er the strong.

III.

See! the goblet strikes the board,
And nature pleads to day;
Each warrior girts his blunted sword,
Collects his tattered, trophied hoard,
And speeds his homebound way:

Hope

Hope heaves his breast
As home draws nigh;
But fluttering joy is mortal's hope,
And smiles may veil a sigh.

IV.

Ah! what transports thrill his soul,
How all the man gives way!
When reach'd at length, the darling goal,
Soft chrystal streams from beauty roll,
And pledge love's gentlest sway.
The rosy babe,
His little pride;
Casts round a wond'ring, yearning glance,
And nestles to his side.

V.

"Tell me, love," soft woman cries,
And lifts her swimming eye,
"How fares my life, my heart's best ties?
Recount me all thy victories,—
Speak, and I know thee nigh.
What generous steel
Turn'd sweet aside,
And fear'd to scar my lord's lov'd breast,
In pity to his bride?"

VI.

The warrior clasps the velvet hand,
And strokes his infant's cheek:
In broken glee, old feats are scann'd,
In smother'd rapture, listners stand,
Whilst looks sweet credence speak.

Hail

Hail then the day,
When discords cease!
When glutted honour breaks each spell,
And gives back home and peace!

The whole company shouted for triumph in the song. The Lady Elgiva gazed upon her son as a bright tear of joy rose to her eye and glittered, but feared to droop. The Lady Beauchamp held out her fair hand to Atheling, and beckoned for the golden cup to pledge him; he presented it to her; she touched the beverage with her lip, and as he received it back, he leaned over, and kissed the brim—he raised one glance to the Lady Julia, his lip moved without a sound—her dark and sparkling eye, tempered with the soft curtain of angel's modesty, met his—it fell downward, but a thousand little graces gathered round the carnation of her tender cheek, and promised hope to virtuous love.

The Earl rose, and smiling said, "thanks, good old man for thy music; thou hast not so well sung since my son left Restormal. Thine is a wondrous talent, and I am proud to hear thee. Farewell, my people, my age will

will excuse me; my lady and my honoured guests will require repose, but my son shall stay awhile, and if you will he may join your festivities. But ere we depart, we will drink to the health and happiness of these illustrious ladies, wife and daughter to Thomas, the most noble and generous Earl of Warwick, who, my King and Prince excepted, is the most valiant knight of Christendom."

In a moment, the enraptured people, headed by Atheling, whose glowing cheek bespoke his love, gratitude, and joy, shouted the name so dear to his heart. The ladies bent and would have retired; but a number of old men led forward their daughters, and making low obeisance to Julia, said, "oh, madam, let us crave one favour —let us be allowed to say to our grandchildren that the charming daughter of Warwick's noble Earl joined even with us in the dance—yes, madam; we shall never forget the favour—only for one little hour." The Lady Beauchamp smiled on the blushing and retreating Julia, whilst Edgar bowed to the ground as he solicited her beautiful hand.

hand. "Go, my love, we will wait for thee," said the mother of Julia. Edgar respectfully took the half-extended hand, and led with a palpitating breast his blushing partner to the upper end of the hall, whilst the proud concourse ranged themselves for the dance. With sweet modesty the Lady Julia did the task, and amidst a thousand praises and blessings on the lovely pair, Edgar led her with respectful tenderness to the ladies; who bowed to the assembly, and withdrew.

The following morning Edgar sprang from his couch, and with fervent devotion poured out before heaven's throne his grateful acknowledgments and praises for every blessing, and every merciful protection. Then he descended to his father's library. The old man was seated in his usual place, whilst his chaplain read from the holy book, and repeated a few prayers. Atheling attentively waited till the devout exercise was concluded, when the Earl extended his hand and his son met and pressed it to his breast. "I have been," said the Earl, "a poor feeble mortal since thy departure, my

my son; and for some weeks my limbs refused to assist me. 'Twas on a sudden, that one whole side of my emaciated frame grew cold, stiff, and idle; and then I was forced to desert the public service in the hall, and to have prayers read in my closet; but thy mother attends to my wish, and joins in public duty with her people, and I require the same of thee, Edgar. We owe an example to every inferior, and let us give it."

The Prince assured his father; and then with anxiety and pain observed, that one hand hung lifeless. Edgar touched it, and placing it between his own, deeply sighed. Mercia overheard, and said, "place thyself by me, my son; I must converse with thee—lament not for my useless limb, but rejoice rather with me, that I am spared to give thee my blessing ere I go hence, for prepare thyself for a separation my child. I feel—I feel nature breaking fast under her burthen—my breast is hollow within, and proclaims the last stage of decay. Yet what of this? shall we not all pass off as shadows—the day must come, when we shall be

be numbered with the dead, and be seen no more. I bless my God for the hope he hath given me; come when the time will, I trust, I humbly trust, I shall be ready to meet the summons. Now, Edgar, my pride, give me a faithful narration of every event that has happened to thee since we last parted—faithful and undisguised, let the son of Mercia relate; nor fear reproach from the father and friend of his infancy."

It was long ere Atheling could conquer his tender emotion, and obey his parent. At last, he cried, "oh, my beloved and respected monitor and friend! many and great have been my faults—most wondrous my escapes—yet have I remembered the profound lessons of truth—with all my errors I forgot not the first precept of thy lip—yes, I will lay bare my life's events before thee, and by my hope of meeting him hereafter, so will I conceal nothing from my father."

The chaplain had quitted the chamber. Atheling with a modest confusion bent his head, thoughtless that no eye could gaze on his crimsoned cheek. Then he unfolded every

every occurrence, seeking neither palliation nor excuse, but here and there seasoning every event with self-reproach; not a single matter left he untold; but all was said, and he ceased.

The Earl gave him no interruption. The speaker waited the judgment—but yet it was delayed. "Alas!" said he at length, "alas! poor de Clifford! his idolizing mother—poor lady—oh my son!—why art thou spared!—Edgar—I owe thee counsel upon thy narration; let me ponder it in my mind—leave me awhile—yet listen. My noble friend of Warwick has it with me at heart, to unite our families. It is well that the lady we have fixed on is now here. Her mother kindly visited Restormal several weeks since, when thy mother wept in my illness. She brought hither her youngest and sole unmarried daughter; and we have prayed her to wait the arrival of Beauchamp; then shall thy wedding be celebrated, that I may bless thee and thine before the world shut me out for ever. If the lady can like thee, and if she be so young and innocent thou mayst surely win her

her heart, she shall be thine. Improve therefore the moments; and when thou canst with chaste and tender persuasion urge her to acceptance, lead her to me that I may invoke blessings on my children, my house, and my name."

Edgar with pensive step quitted his father, and moving on to the saloon, flung himself in a chair and sighing deeply, placed both hands over his forehead. He was roused in a moment, by the rustling of a garment, and he suddenly raised his head. The beautiful daughter of Beachamp had risen from a recess, and now stood with sympathising inquiry near him. Atheling looked up, and gazing on her sweet face, caught the expression of pity, as it breathed through her countenance, with a half smile, he said, "oh madam, my soul is most grateful for the sweet kindness of that look—did you but know the solemn words just uttered by my father! he tells me, alas! that nature is half exhausted, and that I must soon be fatherless. Oh, madam, 'tis hard to part with such a friend." "Be comforted, Sir," answered the maid, "we

" we have seen our good friend much worse in health; he is now in full strength, if compared to what he has been. Joy in your return overcomes his spirits; please heaven he shall still meet my dear father in chearfulness and health."

" Charming lady!" cried Edgar, bending before her, " how shall I requite thy goodness for the hope?—yet—how to address her—ye angels of purity!—yet, madam—there is one—one matter that lays near his heart—condescend but to listen—suffer me thus to trespass on your gracious kindness, and to obey my father—only a few moments, and I ask no more."

The solemn air—the respectful eagerness of Atheling, affected the young Julia. Thoughtful, silent, doubting, and half apprehensive but of what she scarcely knew, she suffered Edgar to touch her cold hand, and lead her to a seat, he placed himself near; and after a short pause began.

" The matter which my father has commanded me to lay before you, is concerning a favour, which the house of Warwick has alone the power to grant." " Oh, Sir," interrupted

interrupted Julia, as she lifted her beaming eyes, "my father has ever loved yours, and can he now refuse him any request?" "Lovely lady," cried Edgar, as a bright fire kindled round his features and drew a flash of vermilion upon Julia's averted cheek—"lovely lady, my father and thine have been from infancy more than brothers, so truly have they read each other's mind and lived in mutual harmony. Oh, madam, the wish of both fathers is to cement this friendship in the children. Forgive my precipitance—my parent is feeble; heaven may not very long preserve him to his beloved family, his only hope is to see me united to the best, the loveliest of women. Oh, Lady Julia, long yet in secret beloved, our parents have given their sanction, and in their venerable behalf, let me plead. Give me, daughter of the noblest of men and dearest of friends next to my own parents, give me one little hope. Mine is not, most charming Julia, an affection of yesterday; I was deeply impressed, even in early youth, with thy sweet promise. In distant climes, I met thy father, he spoke

spoke of thee as in the blush of life—my latent affection burst forth;—he sanctioned my hopes—he gave me a pledge of his truth which I have ever guarded as my life—turn not then away thy beauteous eye from me; speak, oh loveliest of women, speak, have compassion on me, have pity on my drooping father."

Edgar bent one knee to the ground, and drew forth the scarf from his breast. Julia glanced on the well-remembered work, and lifting her soft hands to her angelic face, tried to conceal the tears which crept down, and fell on the snowy folds which crossed her chaste bosom. Atheling, with sweet tenderness, cried, "Julia, most beloved Julia, oh do not weep, that my breast be not wrung in anguish in the fear of having distressed thy graceful reserve—if a word have escaped my daring lip that could offend the purity of angels—here will I kneel be it for ever, till I have thy forgiveness. Speak then, beauteous Julia—cease those tears. By my love and reverence for thy noble father—by my respect for thy charming mother—by my truth, and

and mine honour as a soldier, and a man, I meant not to breathe a thought that could offend thee."—" Ah, my lord," said the trembling Julia — " Speak but one word," interrupted Atheling, " say, sweet Julia, say that thou believest mine assertion, and if thou believest my truth, give me hope ; suffer me to approach thee, and to think that one day, however distant it be, my father may bless and call us both his children. Nay—I will not urge thy lip, extend thy hand, one little hope—'tis all I ask."

The maid continued silent—Edgar respectfully touched her hand ; and as it made no resistance, he gently drew it forward and pressed it with ardour between his own, whilst he gazed delighted upon the blushing countenance, but half concealed under the lily hand. " Now," said he, " one single word, say, dearest Julia, speak but one little word, that thou wilt permit me to hope—one word, my lovely Julia, one small word, and my soul, the soul of Atheling, shall owe thee gratitude for ever."

Julia

Julia now withdrew her hand from her forehead, her beautiful eye still swimming in the dew of modest emotion; a soft smile played on her innocent lip as she gently said, "my lord, I beseech you rise. I love my father—I respect his will—do not press me more; but suffer me to return to my mother, who is still in her chamber." The noble visage of Atheling flashed new animation; he pressed his lip strong on the hand he held, and then respectfully resigning it, said, "no, lovely Julia, I respect thy graceful dignity; I will not now urge more—I bless thee for the hope I have. Thou art free to retire, most dear Julia, and mayst thou be rewarded for the sweet joy thou hast shed over mine existence." Thus as he spoke, the lady rose, cast her modest glance on the ground, and permitted the enraptured warrior to lead her to the staircase—again he pressed her hand, and bowing low, turned back his step, crossed the hall, and quelled the mingled emotions of his breast in the fine breeze of morning.

The castle bell soon summoned the

whole family of Restormal to prayers and the morning repast—the lady guests sent excuses for not attending; and the Countess of Mercia, who had before embraced her son, after joining in the duties of religion, hastened to finish the domestic arrangements of the day, and then ascended to offer her respects to the ladies. Edgar hurried over his meal and immediately sought his father, whom weakness obliged to call for food, when he rose from sleep at the dawn of day.

Atheling moved gently in the chamber. "Is it thou, my son?" asked the old man. "Yes, my lord," replied Edgar; "I am come for my instructions, beloved father of my youth; happy I, in being spared to hear the voice which never sounded before me, but for mine advantage and mine honour."

"'Tis well;" replied the old man with trembling accents, "'tis well, mine Edgar, thou hast been a dutiful child and good; and heaven will bless thee—and for me, my son, I have done no more for thee than should every parent for his child—and I am

I am grateful—yes, 'tis a sweet consolation, when the eye is dim, the limb palsied, the breast fluttering in its last struggles, and Nature rallyin ground the last hope—oh! 'tis a sweet consolation then, to look back on one duty fulfilled! Heaven made me a parent, and I have endeavoured to remember my trust. But enough; the few days that remain shall be dedicated to thee. I have much to say upon the new station which thou art to fill—the statesman, the peer, the husband, the master, the friend—they shall employ my last thoughts; every other earthly account is closed; my last sacrifice is made; I humbly hope all is settled between my gracious Maker and my poor self;—I stand prepared for the signal that shall waft my soul from the habitations of man, and all that remains in me of life beats alone for my child."

Atheling knelt before his father, and clasped in the strongest emotion his trembling hands. The Earl felt the warm tear of grateful affection, and paused for a few moments—then he continued.

"I know thou hast tenderness of heart,

my Edgar; even, perhaps, more than thy countrymen, who are famed for the keenest feeling, which swells and throbs, and writhes out many a premature misery—I know, and early perceived this gift of nature; and well it was, that I did so, and that I held back from shewing thee mine own weakness, for thou wouldst have been unfitted to strive with rougher man in the harsh walks of life. I gave myself to thee as a friend; yet I held little reserves in my own hand to keep thy passions in awe. When my soul has been swimming in delight in the dawn of thy virtues, in thy humanity which shuddered to plant thy little foot on a harmless worm in thy path —in thy speech which was spotless even to knowing not the meaning of untruth— when I have been thus rejoiced, I have bound my affections in adamant, fearing to injure thee. A smile would shew an approbation, and a smile I gave thee—thine eye beamed joy, and 'twas enough. Thou art not now to learn, my child, how dangerous is excess in any shape; in a thousand ways are we frail mortals shewn that moderation

alone

alone is enjoyment, and this enjoyment happiness—'tis a slight repast for an ardent soul, but let such an one cast his eye elsewhere—Eternity alone shall give him repletion.

" The more I consider thy narration, Edgar, still more do I behold the gracious designs of Providence. Had I never before considered that an Infinite and All-wise Power lays down from beginning to end, laws, which further his own will, and work all things for the accomplishment of two purposes,—the justification of his ways to man in the reward of the good, and the punishment of the wicked—had I never before given a thought to this awful subject, I should now stand amazed in the goodness and grandeur of the power, which we call Providence—yes, thou hast suffered, Edgar; but mark how different, how widely different were thy pangs of affliction to those of remorse! 'tis in this difference that the majesty of Eternal Goodness is asserted. Calamity may fall and cover young locks with premature silver, but affliction does not turn the eye of virtuous

sorrow from the canopy of heaven ; on the contrary, every sorrow is a step planted towards everlasting rest, and a link broken in the chain of earthly bondage—affliction then is bitter, but it is also sweet. Not so remorse, the unhappiness that follows sin—'tis here that the prospect of heaven diminishes ; that the heavy eye drooping downward, wanders in vacuity ; that the throbbing breast heaves at once to sorrow, to despondence, to conflict, to misery ; that retrospection is torture ; futurity hopelessness ; that the soul deprived of her best stay and consolation, and stripped of the hopes with which she sprang from her Maker pure and spotless, and with which the Redeemer a second time clothed her, languishes, pines, fades, and rebukes not any suggestion of despair. Thus, unlike my Edgar, are the sorrows of guilt from those of affliction.

" But if we trace back every calamity as we think it falls, doubtless for wise ends, up to its first spring and source, how often shall we not perceive the origin to have been in our own immediate actions! How

How often mightst not thou have seen this, my son? Yet, for some of thine errors, I am to be reproached—yes, they fall back even to me. When I educated thee, all my desire was to hold thy passions in awe, and still preserve thy heart tender; 'twas a nice point. For the first, I gave thee Religion; for the second, I would not permit thee to hear of, much less behold, cruelties or crimes, and I even kept thee in ignorance as to the extent of wickedness in the world. On this account I trembled when thou leftst me—I feared designing men and artful women—yet could I act otherwise? could I have steeled thy heart to affection, sympathy, humanity? should I have done well to bid thee beware of every noble countenance, and flee from every gentle smile?—oh never. Cold suspicion never lurked in thy breast; 'twas time enough to mistrust when thou hadst been deceived—and yet if I could have given thee one hint to be cautious!—I wished, ardently wished, but I said to thy mother, no; to what intent have we implanted these strong principles, if they be not to

resist temptation? Let him be innocent, for he is young. Years will bring knowledge—knowledge settles, and experience gradually rises to remind manhood of past escapes, and to give him caution for time to come. The fate of the old pilgrim shews thee the danger of nourishing suspicion in young breasts—the end of the brave and repentant de Clifford, shews the danger of cultivating art and science, whilst the heart, the mind, are neglected, and that the passions are allowed full growth; and thy story displays fully, my beloved son, that there is a good Providence, who is ever ready to grant a blessing on the virtuous endeavours of man. A Providence, that has visibly guided, directed, and preserved thee; perhaps, in the shape of some guardian spirit, whose office it may be to watch over the virtuous. Oh, my child, my heart swells within me in gratitude; words die away, and utterance expires in my feeble breath, in my joy. What am I, my Maker, that thou shouldst so bless me in mine offspring? who am I that I should feel such hope? oh

Edgar,

Edgar, child of mine age, my pride, let me again embrace and bless thee; by the tears which rush from these dim orbs, the last thy old father may shed, promise me to remember to thy dying hour this injunction: that goodness alone is happiness. Yes,—'tis the last weakness of nature; let me strain thee to my breast; let these frosted locks lean once again on thy shoulder; and then, angels that surround the departing soul, and whisper comfort to the fluttering heart—then, bend your flight when ye will, and receive me."

Thus spoke the Earl, whilst a flush of joy like the golden ray of evening round a summer cloud, encircled his cheek, and half scorched the tear that rolled over. He stood firm, animated, strong as a warrior; one arm he forcibly pressed round his son; the other in the strong effort of Nature, moved also. For a moment, all was forgotten in parental love; but strength drooped; the flush passed away, the palsied hand fell lifeless, the knee relaxed, and the Earl sank again in his chair. Edgar took the revered head, and

supported it, drooping and exhausted, on his breast—he lifted the useless hand, and chafed it in his own, whilst emotion choked his speech; at length, as he again bent the knee, with half stifled voice, he said, "Most beloved of fathers, best of men! in this posture before thee—in the face of heaven, I promise to remember thy sacred injunction. My beloved friend, to whom I owe all under my heavenly Father, oh hear and accept my warm, my deep acknowledgments and thanks for the thousand, thousand cares lavished upon me;—and even now, for this last, this tender, this kindest blessing. My father, for all, for every uneasiness I have ever caused thee, pardon me; forgive me every expression not grateful, every look that did not acquiesce in thy will. I could recollect many replies not dutiful enough, many opportunities for expressing my obligations to thee, passed by. Talk not, then, my venerable parent, of death. I cannot—oh, my father, my protector, my guide, I cannot part with thee."—"Hush, my child," interrupted the Earl, "'tis not well

well to say so; yet I know thy love for thy parents. Go, Edgar, thou hast nothing but fulfilled duty to look back upon. No son ever watched more his father's eye, or hung in more dutiful sweetness upon a parent's will, than hast thou, from thine infancy upward. Leave me now, mine Edgar; mine is a withered tree shaken to its foundation by every gust, and truly passion becomes me not: flame riseth not in embers. Go, my son, and let me recal the modesty of age and decay."

Atheling, ever accustomed to obey, once more embraced his father, and slowly left the chamber; he turned to the chapel, and kneeling before the altar, remained long in silent prayer for the author of his existence.

In the evening, Mercia had regained his placid gravity, but his limbs still trembled, and refused him support. For the first time, Edgar was commanded to take the seat of his ancestors, in the centre of the hall. The Prince was melancholy and thoughtful; he forgot the duties of his station; deep sighs rose in his breast. The musician watched his lord's eye, and struck

a plaintive air; Edgar looked up; Lady Julia sat near him, pale and dejected. In a moment, Atheling endeavoured to rally his spirits; he assisted the guests, called for the golden vase, took it from the cup-bearer, and moistened his lip. "The toast, my lord," said an aged man, "we wait your command." Atheling rose, and in a faltering voice, said, as he again touched the beverage, "My father—the Earl's recovery." All the numerous guests rose by one impulse, as the herald blasted the words through the brazen horn.[116] The Earl's recovery was shouted by every voice, aged and tender. Atheling bowed low; and looked aside to conceal the struggle of affection.

But in a few days, Mercia appeared to revive; and Edgar, with the winning subtlety of man's persuasion, then drew from the blushing daughter of Beauchamp, that she would offer no obstacle to the plighting of her faith, when the Earl of Warwick should return. And now the joyful mothers permitted the young couple to breathe their chaste sentiments together in the park,

park, or on the ramparts. Sometimes they strayed to the village; and as the peasantry flocked in admiration around them, would smile, encourage babies' prattle and mother's fondness, by their own queries; sometimes they roved on the banks of the Fowey, whilst they listened to the sweet warblers that skirted its banks, or watched the leaping fish as he wantoned in his oozy bed.

One evening they bent their step to the druid's monument. 'Twas a sweet spot, where nature revelled in spring, and laughed in summer. A grove of red-berried mountain-ash flourished on one side, and on the other, a silver stream which crept from a neighbouring rock, bounded over the long grass, and trickled between every loose pebble; 'twas seated on a gentle eminence which caught in Restormal, and swept in the prospect, the distant ocean, and the flowing river. The illustrious pair had ascended the steep; and Atheling pointed out, as they rested on the base of the vast Logan stones,[117] objects skirted by clouds which half concealed them. Julia suddenly

suddenly stopped him. "Hush, my lord, surely I heard a plaintive sound of distress?" Edgar immediately listened: "and it proceeds from the tombs in the little church yard; some unfortunate weeps over a newly made grave."—"I will see, my Julia, wait here for me," said Edgar. "Nay, my lord," replied the lady, "some one may be ill; I too will assist." Atheling smiled sweetly, and gave his strong arm to the support of the maid he loved; they entered the enclosure, and gazing round, observed that the murmurs arose from two females, who appeared contending for some point. The noble pair hastened to the spot; the elder female perceived Julia, and turning quickly, shewed a face pale as the new broached vein of alabaster; her mild azure eye was deep seated in its bed, and her long wild tresses were fancifully enwreathed with blue bells, excepting a few melancholy locks, which fell on her throat, snowy and down-like as the swan's, and hung midway; her slender figure was robed in sable, and her delicate hands grasped a clump of flower roots;

roots; she looked up in Julia's face, and laying her cold finger on her hand, said, "They want to take me away, lady; tell her to go—indeed, indeed, I will not be naughty."—"Poor unfortunate!" cried Julia to Atheling, with emotion, "her reason is fled." Edgar fixed his sympathizing eye upon the faded form, whilst he listened eagerly to catch another sound of that voice so tender, so plaintive, so full of woe. "Methinks, I ought to recollect her," said Atheling, after a pause, "yet I cannot." —"Speak then," answered Julia, "she may recollect thee."

Now the poor wanderer gazed on Edgar, and then seating herself on the earth, began quickly to plait her wild flowers, as she looked continually to see if the warrior gazed upon her. "What art thou doing, poor maid?" inquired Atheling; she started up, leaned, as if eagerly listening, and then sighing said, "I thought it had been my Alfred—'twas like Alfred—but he is gone —I will plait the bluebells for thee, and wear them for thee, because thou hast a soldier's garb—Alfred was a soldier—he went

went to battle with my Lord Edgar, and an arrow drank up his blood—then he fell, and they made him a little bed in the earth—and now they tell me, I may not sit by him, and talk to him. Lady, I will not be naughty—see, I will speakso soft, so low, that my love only shall hear me."

Atheling now recognized the maid to whom his faithful Alfred had been betrothed; and he hid his face. "Alas! poor Maud," said he, in a low whisper, "how deep are thy sorrows!" She caught the name, and a flash crossed her cheek. "I thought Alfred had called, but he is asleep in his little bed. Stranger," cried she, "I could tell thee more of Alfred, for thou art kind to poor Maud, only I fear to waken my love—they tell me, if he wakes, he will be covered with cold worms —'tis very strange; but let us speak soft, and not disturb him—his father is gone to ask him to come back to me in his own dress, not in the soldier's mail; but he will not come because of the arrow, it had such a cutting point—oh, 'twas very sharp and keen to drink mine Alfred's blood."

The

The Lady Julia melted into tears; Maud, exhausted with speech, sat on a stone, and again wound the flowers among her light tresses; and now the young woman who had stood by the sufferer, modestly advanced, and whispered her to come away. "Whose is that grave?" inquired Edgar, when he could command his utterance. "'Tis the father of Alfred, sir," replied she, "he expired with grief, six months after the news of his son's death, and Maud has ever thought that both lie there—she would remain here for days, but that we entice her away."—"And who are you, my dear?" inquired Julia. "I am her sister, madam," said the young maiden. "Doth my Lord Mercia know this sad tale?" said Atheling. "Yes, sir," said she, "and the Countess our lady, honours us often by her presence; and her name is the only one she always heeds. Come, sister," said she, softly, "come, my lady likes you not to stay so, on the cold earth." Maud instantly rose, and cried, "Oh yes, for Alfred loved my lady and my lord too, and he bade me love them, when he went away with

with the good Prince Edgar.—Come, sister, drag me on; for my sandal is made of stone, thou knowst, and I cannot run; see, sister, my foot moves so slow; drag me on, or my lady will chide."—"Let me assist thee," cried Edgar, as he marked her feeble step.—"No, no," cried she, "no, thou art a soldier—but thou art not Alfred. —Sister, do not let him touch me."—"Heaven forbid that I should aggravate thy griefs," said Atheling, mournfully, "I will not intrude upon—but we will all unite in trying to console thee: and thou too, my Julia, wilt be injured in the evening air; let me hasten with thee to the castle; our parents will wonder in our stay." Then he placed her hand within his arm, and silent and thoughtful they took the road home.

"Alas!" cried Edgar, as they passed Restormal gates, "what is the guilt of that monarch, who, without just cause, but only to gratify revenge or ambition, leads his thousands to battle, and in the numbers of slain, creates for his realms such miseries as we have just witnessed! Thanks to the virtues

virtues of our native princes, to the grand and noble fabric of our constitution, war is never resolved on, without just cause and mature deliberation. Even were our monarch of sanguinary nature, yet is he so bound up in laws, that he dares take no violent hostile measures till the council, the peers, and representatives of his people agree in its necessity, and furnish him with the means. Happy and favoured nation!" —"And happy I," said Julia, whilst her look beamed innocence, love, and tenderness, "happy I to be spared the anguish of poor Maud. Oh, my lord, every tongue around me sounded such praise of thy father, thy sweet mother and thee, that had Poictiers' sword, or noxious gales stopped thy breath, my young heart could have pined in secret for thy loss, like the unconscious leaf, which, for sympathy, droops and withers on a crushed stem, and then lays its little head on the earth without a sigh."—"Dear, lovely maid," returned Atheling. "Ah, Julia! can it be, that Edgar, a captive, a wanderer, an exile—can it be, that thy tender bosom ever heaved

heaved one sigh in his long absence? Thou beauteous maid, to whom bowed the proudest of England's peerage? Oh, my Julia, how shall I thank thee—love thee—devote my soul to thy happiness; how express half the affection, the tenderness, the respect, my soul bears thee; thy sweet smile, thy soft look, so secure in heavenly innocence, insinuate through every beat of life, and make me to stand abashed in the grandeur of virtue's silence."

Thus spoke the lovely pair, and entered the court-yard. "Horses are pacing yonder," said Atheling to a domestic, "what guests?"—"My Lord of Warwick," replied he. "My father!" exclaimed Julia, —"oh joy; where, where is he?"—"I am here, my cherub," said the great Beauchamp, who hastened through the hall, "I have only embraced my lady and my friend —give me my child—my children." Julia flung her lovely arm round the neck of her parent, and hid her sweet face in his breast. Atheling blushed and stopped. "Come hither, Edgar," cried Beauchamp, "art thou not my son? Let me embrace my children.

dren. Our gracious King commands me to hasten the preparation that he may give thee thy bride, Edgar, ere I again depart for Aquitain; he must needs have the nuptials solemnized at Windsor Castle in less than one month. He has himself written to my cherub for the day, that he may command magnificent entertainments."—"Oh, my father!" said the blushing Julia, again concealing her lovely visage,—whilst Edgar, transported with delight and happiness, flung himself on his knee before the Earl of Warwick, who raised and pressed him fervently in his arms; and as Julia slid aside, Beauchamp took her hand, and placing it in Atheling's, said, "Heaven bless you, my children;" and then turned away to seek the letters which he bore from the King to his friend and daughter.

In a few days the timid Julia gave a tacit consent to the time fixed upon by the parents; and, with a trembling hand, she obeyed the command of her father, and copied the reply that her mother had penned to the monarch of England and France.

The

The messenger waited to receive it, and hastened away.

Now the joyful news of the union of the two noble families took wing, and spread abroad. The people rushed from every adjacent part to catch one look at the chief and his beautiful bride. The castle-hall was crowded with guests; and whilst every eye gazed on the modest pair who were seated at the central table, the aged bards, delighted and inspired, poured forth sweet sounds to match the eloquence of verse; every heart rejoiced in the hospitable board, and every lip invoked blessings and praise on the houses of Mercia and Warwick.

Edgar's father would no longer be absent from the honest throng. He was supported into the hall for three nights—he passed round the goblet untouched, but he gave the healths his people loved. "My Country and my King," shouted every guest, whilst tears gushed from many an eye at the loved words. But the Earl of Mercia's light wavered in its socket; and a whiff made it tremble. He too shouted, as he pressed

pressed his hand on his virtuous breast, "My Country and my King,"—but, on the fourth evening, as he uttered the words, he felt senseless in the high enthroned seat on which he had been placed. Atheling sprang, swifter than the pinioned dove, and truer to nature's call, and grasped his beloved parent in his strong arms. "Away! —give me room—or he is gone!" cried he to the multitudes that pressed forward. They divided; and the son, with distraction's step, rushed with his loved burthen through to the large apartment within. Lady Elgiva, pale as the statue of death, fled after him. "Open the casement, dear Madam," cried Edgar. "Oh, my father! look up—look; 'tis your son calls;—your own child, who has for so many years been absent—look but a little—but one word! Oh, angels of heaven!—yet a little grace, a little respite of his happiness! My father, my friend, desert me not so soon, so very soon after we have met!—My father....."

Atheling thus spoke, as wild terror brushed away the carnation of his cheek, and

and left it faded as the moonbeam. The Earl of Warwick now hastened to assist his beloved friend, whilst the Countess, with clasped hands and silent woe, raised her fine eyes from her husband to heaven, and from heaven to earth, in supplication—and the Lady Julia leaned on her mother's shoulder, and hid her tears in the long ringlets that fell round her bosom.

The ministering angel of high order that had been charged to usher upward the enfranchised soul of a just man, now lighted with unknown step in the chamber. Thousands of inferior spirits fluttered around him in all the beauty of innocence, and beatitude of joy. "To your charge, ye innocents," said the angel, "I have given the signal. During one hour administer every soothing balm; cheer every drooping suggestion of his weak frame; lighten in him an holy ardour; give him love, tranquillity and joy, whilst I break away the little holds of life so gently that I may approach and embrace the new-born soul without causing to its dust one sigh."—

Quickly

Quickly the heavenly attendants obeyed, and gathered in sweet order round the charge.

The Earl of Mercia again felt the glow of life: his breast again throbbed—he opened his dim eye. "He lives! oh heaven, I bless thee!—he lives, and all is well!" exclaimed Atheling, and grasped his father's hand. "Hush! my beloved son," said Mercia, with a sweet smile; "if it be true that I am still on earth—but what—what change works within me? How placid my frame—how bright my hope—how cheered my views! Hark! methinks I could almost hear an angel whispering peace to my soul—yes, surely 'tis death—'tis death creeping to me so softly, so tenderly, that my spirit may not be cast down; yes, 'twill be sweet to throw off this perished suffering cover of dust, and to be robed in immortality. Oh, my Maker, I bless thee that I have lived prepared to stand at thy tribunal with humble confidence! I feel that I dare hope—I feel—I thank—and I adore thee, for all thy manifold, thy wondrous mercies; but most—

but most—for this sweet comfort, in the trying hour of separation from the earth, to which I have so long clung. Oh, if I had not remembered my Great Creator in my youth!—if I had now my hasty peace to make with heaven! what horrors!—Lord of my life! what praise shall I render thee, or how speak of thy gracious benefits! Oh hither, my son, whilst life is still warm—thou, Elgiva, my chaste, beloved, and faithful partner—thou, my own Beauchamp—my sweet daughter, my innocent Julia, come—let me enfold ye all, by turns, in these trembling arms, and then—and then, I will spring forward, and wing my flight hence for ever."

Atheling, in agonies of woe, bent over his departing father, to catch a last embrace. "Oh, my father—my parent—my friend!" he uttered, and his voice, smothered in grief, was lost. "Listen, my beloved son," said the Earl of Mercia; "Julia, give me thy hand; where art thou, my sweet blossom, my daughter?" The tender maid put her innocent knee to the earth, and placed her cold lilly hand in

the

the hand of her second father. He pressed it to his paternal lip; then, holding Edgar's, and joining them, "this, my children, representatives of my family, and supporters of my name, this is mine only wish, my dying command: that ye both attend the gracious monarch of England, on the appointed day. Let my dust be returned to mix with my ancestors, soon, very soon after my spirit has fled. Then, however early, commence the preparations for the nuptials; and so may heaven bless your union. Lift me now, my friends, I beseech you, high on the couch; I have still a duty."

Beauchamp, whilst his great breast swelled with grief, assisted in raising his friend, and stretched him at his length. Edgar, speechless, knelt on one side, and the Countess in silent suffering remained near her loved partner, and hid her beautiful visage in the folds of her robe. Mercia paused awhile, and then continued: "let a domestic, if one be present, return to the great hall, and command hither all the youth and children."

In a few moments, with respectful step, and scarcely daring to breathe, advanced two hundred young men and virgins, of different ages, and ranged themselves with trembling awe round the immense saloon, opposite to their dying patron. The Earl then again spoke:

"I have sent for ye, my friends, young, blooming as ye are, and in the morning of life, to gaze on my wasted frame, and to witness my departure from earth. This suffering body will soon be cold and inanimate—my pulse will soon cease to beat—my limbs will stiffen, and my soul will have broken away from dust, to return to it no more. But now hearken, my friends:—this change has no terrors for me; your patron and your friend dreads not death, for he has lived prepared for this great day. All his petition to heaven has been, to embrace his child, your new Earl; this wish has, with tenfold blessings, been granted him; the son, the fond object of his care, is now near to close his eyes; he is even favoured with a bright prospect of happiness for this son, in a lovely and virtuous

tuous bride, and the daughter of the dearest friend, next to your kind and good lady, of his heart. Who am I, Lord, to be so rich in thy wondrous bounties?"

"And yet, oh my people, and my friends, I look back on many parts of my life with sorrow, for man is faulty in his best of days. But by the joy that insinuates through every vein, and buoys up my heart, I dare hope—I feel—I am assured, that my God has pardoned my errors, and accepts the humble confidence I have reposed in Him from my youth. Yes, I dare hope. Behold then, my joy, my faith, my placid frame! behold, and remember how a christian can die. All ye, that have forgotten your Maker, and have refused him praise, turn again without delay; for life may not, as with me, be prolonged to old age. Look at me—wait till my last sigh be drawn—'twill be soft as a babe's sleep; for pain has fled away, and my soul smiles in full and perfect tranquillity."

The Earl again paused—not a sound rose, to disturb his last impressive words; even of movement there was none, save

that of the hands that rose to sweep off the big and trickling tear.

Meanwhile, the Guardian Angel that had watched over Edgar from his youth, met and saluted the guardian of his father. "I salute thee," cried the superior; "I salute thee, blessed harbinger of virtue; well hast thou performed thine angelic mission; but the day is arrived—youth is passed away; the father mounts to bliss, and I quit the father to lead the son. Thy mission is finished, beauteous angel; and another virtuous charge shall be thine, till thy favourite be blessed in his own offspring, then will I expect thine attendance. I now step aside to admit the angel of death."—"I hail thee, angelic power!" replied the guardian of youth, "I hail the sacred mandate, and obey."

The dying man now felt a soft heaviness steal over his eye. The ministering spirit advanced, and pressed lightly on his forehead. In sweet and unheard accents, he cried, "come, thou righteous soul, that art to hasten away—come, I charge thee; the harps swell to greet thee—the gates of Sion

Sion open to receive thee—hasten, beloved soul, to new life, and joys unknown before."

The Earl raised his hands: "farewell, my family—my friends—I come! Remember the death of a christian!" This said, his eye closed—his immortal part sprang forward, and was released in an instant from its dust. Ethereal robes were flung around it, and the angels assembled bowed in sweet salutation. The innocents burst into songs of praise, and with heavenly smiles the new soul beamed o'er its loved friends, and then rose with perfect bliss to mansions of everlasting rest.

"He is gone! Oh, father of mine infancy—oh, my most beloved father!—People, never will ye again hear his loved voice!—Oh, my father, my father!" cried Edgar, and fell beside the corpse. But he heard his mother's groan, as it burst from her heart, and he rushed to her. She folded him in her arms, but neither word nor tear escaped her. The Earl of Warwick, full of grief, advanced and seized both their hands, and drew them to another chamber; the Countess permitted the gentle

gentle violence; but when Julia with streaming eyes knelt before her, to excite the backward tear, sighs burst from her breast, and she wept.

The following day the venerated dust was committed to the sepulchral vaults, with honours befitting a princely race; and in two weeks, the most dutiful of children and most perfect of men bent before the King, to receive from his hand his beautiful and virtuous bride.

NOTES.

NOTE 110.]—CYPRUS.—It is a singular thing to represent to ourselves, that, in the middle ages, the temples of Amathus and Idalia were transformed into dungeons. A French gentleman was King of Paphos, and barons, covered with coats of mail were quartered in the sanctuaries of Cupid and the graces.—(*Travels of De Chateaubriand*, vol. i, p. 343.)

Richard the First, King of England, obtained the kingdom of Cyprus by conquest, and exchanged it with Guy de Lusignan, the titular King of Jerusalem. In the year 1423 it became tributary to the Sultans of Egypt, and was ceded to the Republic of Venice by the widow of the last king of the house of Lusignan. —(*Thornton's Turkey*, p. 135.)

NOTE 111.]—CYPRE.—Je vis de tous côtés des femmes et de jeunes filles vainement parées, qui alloient en chantant les louanges de Vénus, se dévouer à son temple : la beauté, les grâces, la joie, les plaisirs éclatoient également sur leurs visages ; mais les grâces y étoient trop affectées: on n'y voyoit point une noble simplicité, et une pudeur aimable, qui fait le plus grand charme de la beauté.. .en un mot tout ce que je voyois dans ces femmes, me sembloit vil et méprisable ; à force de me vouloir plaire, elles me dégoûtoient.—(*Télémaque*, livre iv.)

NOTE 112.]—MILITARY ORDERS. The military diversions of tournaments are not, as they have been generally imagined to be, the invention of these latter ages. They were even customary among the Britons, as they remained among their descendants of Ireland and Caledonia to the third century. Such schools of war, therefore King Arthur found already instituted in the provinces. And he seems to have particularly encouraged them. Hence after the great victory, which

which he obtained over the Saxons in the Caledonian forest, he seems to have celebrated a triumphal tournament in the field. And the small entrenchment which has its ditches within the rampart, and is popularly denominated Arthur's Round Table, still remains upon the spot a probable memorial of the fact.

But this was not enough to diffuse a spirit of gallantry over the kingdom, and kindle a flame of heroism in the nation. For that something else was requisite, which should allure by the novelty of the establishment, and engage by the permanency of the reward. This Arthur saw, and established a military order. It was the first that had ever been instituted in the island; and it has been since imitated by all the nations on the continent. By means of this association, Arthur mixed among the provincials a general glow of ingenuous heroism, the first spirit of chivalry that ever appeared in Europe. The order naturally survived its founder. And the members of it were denominated the Warriors of Arthur, though the persons were born half a century after his death.—(*Whitaker's* 2d vol. p. 63, 64.)

NOTE 113.]—The eldest son of the Black Prince was Edward, who died a child. The second was Richard, afterwards King of England.

NOTE 114.]—Vestiges of the antient Saxon dialect and idiom continue amongst us to this day. The old Saxons used to reckon a small space of time by the night; and we now do the same. Sen'night, or seven nights hence; fortnight, or fourteen nights hence, are both of Saxon origin, and are both admitted in modern calculations of time.—(*See Rapin's England.*)

NOTE 115.]—There are in different antient churches several very curious horns, or the figures of them, carved on stone, some of which are richly embossed and adorned with fine images. These utensils were used, it is imagined, for three purposes: for drinking cups; for the assembling of persons in the favourite amuse-

ments

ments of the chase, or to join in public worship* previous to the general use of bells; and for the pledge or seal in the endowment and enfeoffment of lands, by princes or chieftains.

Sir William Dugdale makes mention of a beautiful relic of antiquity of this kind, now in the great church of York, thus:—

"About this time also, Ulphe, the son of Thorald, who ruled in the West of Deira, by reason of the difference which was like to rise between his sons, about the sharing of his lands and lordships after his death, resolved to make them all alike; and thereupon coming to York, with that horn, wherewith he was used to drink, filled it with wine, and before the altar of God and Saint Peter, Prince of the Apostles, kneeling devoutly, drank the wine, and by that ceremony enfeoffed this church with all his lands and revenues. The figure of which horn in memory thereof, is cut in stone upon several parts of the choir; but, the horn itself, when the reformation in King Edward the Sixth's time began, and swept away many costly ornaments belonging to this church, was sold to a goldsmith, who took away from it those tippings of gold wherewith it was adorned, and the gold chain affixed thereto; since which, the horn itself being cut in ivory, in an eight square form, came to the hands of Thomas, late Lord Fairfax, in whose possession I saw it in the year 1666."†

NOTE 116.]—These kind of stones, Mr. Borlase, in his antiquity of Cornwall, p. 170, says, "are in that part of the world called Logan stones, which he conjectures may come from Logan, which in the Guidhelian (or Irish) British signifies a pit, or hollow of the hand, because in such hollows this moving stone is often found, or it may be a corruption of the British Llygatyn, bewitching, because the singular property of this stone might seem the effect of witchcraft. The first of these opinions has this against it, that all Logan

* Vide Dr. Henry.

† Dugdale's Hist. Account of the Cath. Church of York, p. 7. London, 1715.

Logan stones are not found in hollows, which yet would be necessary to get this general name for them all. In the north of England they are mostly found on high situations, which, if I mistake not, this people chose as often as they could. The second seems a little far fetched; and yet the name of Golcar, where the stone in question is placed, may be thought to favour it in some degree, if it be taken for a contraction of Galdercar, for Galdere in the Anglo-Saxon language means an enchanter or a foreteller of future events, the very character of a Druid; and Carn is a rock.

It is uncertain what language the word Logan is derived from, which makes it more difficult to guess at its meaning. One would think that as the name seems peculiar to Cornwall, the etymology of it should be fetched from the ancient language of that country, and if so, why may it not be a contraction of le, a place, and hogen, vile, and get the appellation of the vile or wicked place, when the inhabitants of that neighbourhood began to embrace Christianity, or le may be considered as a prepositive article, and the words stand thus—

L'Hogen stones, the vile stones, alluding to such practices of the Druids there, as the following more enlightened ages held in detestation.—(*Rev. John Watson on Druidical Remains in or near Halifax. Archæologia*, vol. 2.)

THE END.

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